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ABSTRACT

The need for legislative and administrative action was examined in regard to the GI Bill and the satisfactory progress requirements and the "seat-time" requirements prescribed by regulation. Information is presented on the GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-202), standards of progress of the veteran student, and contact time, or seat time. The current GI Bill provides for discontinuance of educational assistance allowance, if according to the standards and practices of the educational institution, the veteran's progress is unsatisfactory. Contact time, or seat time, refers to the requirement that payment of full-time benefits requires full-time educational activity. Problems have involved nonattendance, withdrawal without penalty, nonenforcement of published standards of progress, or no published standards. It is concluded that the issues involving Standards of Progress and Measurement for Payment Purposes have resulted in a serious deterioration of the relationship between the Veterans Administration and the higher education community. Proposed steps to improve the situation are briefly outlined, and recommendations for legislative and administrative changes are made. Information obtained from a data-gathering project on the GI Bill conducted by William G. Shannon is appended and comprises 342 pages. (SW)

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95th Congress
2d Session } HOUSE COMMITTEE PRINT NO. 170

"PROGRESS OR ABUSE—A CHOICE"

A STUDY

TO INVESTIGATE THE NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS REGARDING STANDARDS OF PROGRESS PROVISIONS OF THE GI BILL AND CLASS SESSION REQUIREMENTS OF THE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS

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NOVEMBER 1978

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VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

DECEMBER 6 - 1978

The Honorable
Ray Roberts
Chairman, Committee on
Veterans' Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to submit two copies of the enclosed report, "Progress Or Abuse--A Choice," a study to investigate the need for legislative and administrative actions regarding standards of progress provisions of the GI Bill and class session requirements of the Veterans Administration Regulations.

The study was made and the report prepared in compliance with Section 305(b)(2)(B), Public Law 95-202. Copies are also being furnished the President, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

Sincerely,

MAX CLELAND
Administrator

Enclosures

PROGRESS OR ABUSE -- A CHOICE

A STUDY

TO INVESTIGATE THE NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS REGARDING STANDARDS OF PROGRESS PROVISIONS OF THE G.I. BILL AND CLASS SESSION REQUIREMENTS OF THE VA REGULATIONS

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
NOVEMBER 1978

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This report is based in part on data gathered by William G. Shannon and Associates under contract with the Veterans Administration. Those data appear intact in Appendix B. However, the analysis, conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are the work of the Veterans Administration.

We take this opportunity to thank Dr. Shannon and his associates, Dr. Frank B. Pesci, Sr. and Mr. Douglas Bradley, for their valuable contributions. We also thank all of the educators, State officials, and others who furnished input.

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INTRODUCTION

This study was mandated by Congress with the passage of P.L. 95-202, "The G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 1977," November 23, 1977. It marks another milestone in a long series of adjustments to the successive versions of the G.I. Bill and its educational benefits.

While the G.I. Bill is often considered an absolute entitlement, in fact, it is a conditional benefit:

--First, veterans must be found eligible for benefits.

--Next, they must enroll in an approved course. There is a long history of what is approvable and what should not be approved by the State approving agencies.

--The veteran must have an educational, vocational, or professional objective, and must make satisfactory progress toward that objective. (There are provisions for tutorial and other assistance if the veteran runs into difficulties.)

--The G.I. Bill provides generous benefits, $311 per month for veterans without dependents (more, if there are dependents).

Examples of Types of Problems Found in the Program:

1. Some veterans have enrolled in courses primarily to collect the benefits checks, with little or no apparent intention of attending classes.

2. Some institutions have permitted such nonstudents to enroll term after term even though no grade or credit is earned.

3. Some institutions have lowered their educational standards or failed to enforce their standards, either to accommodate tax-supported students or to keep up their enrollments, to the point where the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs spoke of collusion between students and administrators.

These and other abuses in the program have led to various corrective measures which tend to fall--in the name of administrative and legislative fairness--on thousands of participating schools and colleges.

Two measures were enacted in 1976 and 1977 when title 38 of the U.S. Code was amended to include:

1. As part of the approval process, accredited participating institutions had to disclose certain standards of

progress in their catalogs, something previously required only of nonaccredited institutions approved under section 1775 of title 38.

2. Then, as if to underline its actions, Congress amended sections 1674 and 1724 of title 38, with a tougher definition of progress, a definition which turned out to be very difficult to administer and to explain, and thus became a source of much contention between the educational community and the Veterans Administration.

In addition, the 95th Congress, in 1977 required the Veterans Administration to conduct a study of the utility and burden of standards of progress and make recommendations.

Requirements for a Study of Standards of Progress and Seat Time:

Sec. 305(b) (2) of P.L. 95-202 states that:

> "...(B) in recognition of the importance of assuring that Federal assistance is made available to those eligible veterans and persons seriously pursuing and making satisfactory progress toward an educational or vocational objective under such chapters [32, 34, 35, and 36 of title 38, United States Code...The Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, in consultation with appropriate bodies, officials, persons, departments, and agencies, shall conduct a study to investigate] the need for legislative or administrative action in regard to sections 1674 and 1724 of title 38, United

> States Code and the regulations prescribed thereunder. A report of such study, together with such specific recommendations for administrative or legislative action as the Administrator deems appropriate, shall be submitted to the President and the Congress not later than... September 30, 1978."

Additionally, this law refers to catalogs and bulletins in Sec. 305(b)(4):

> "Until such time as the Administrator submits the report required..., the Administrator shall suspend implementation of the amendments to sections 1674 and 1724 of title 38, United States Code, made by sections 206 and 307, respectively, of Public Law 94-502, in the case of any accredited educational institution which submits to the Administrator its course catalog or bulletin and a certification that the policies and regulations described in clauses (6) and (7) of section 1776(b) are being enforced by such institution, unless the Administrator finds, pursuant to regulations which the Administrator shall prescribe, that such catalog or bulletin fails to state fully and clearly such policies and regulations."

While a study of problems related to standards of progress is specifically mandated by statute, the requirement of a review of "seat time" regulations and associated problems is referred to in a report of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Senate Report No. 95-468, pages 111-112, states:

> "During the past several months, the Committee has received numerous comments from those involved in degree-granting post-secondary education, voicing concern with the implementation by the VA, and the enforcement thereof, of DVB circular 20-76-16 Measurement for Payment Purposes VA Regulation 14272(d).

> That DVB circular noted that effective October 26, 1976, VA regulations were amended as follows: 'In no case will a course be measured as full time when less than fourteen standard class sessions per week (or twelve standard class sessions if twelve credit hours is full time at the school) are required.' VA Regulation 14200(G) defines the term 'standard class session' as 'the amount of time a student is scheduled in the school's standard length term to spend in class per week for one quarter or one semester hour of credit. Normally but not necessarily, a standard class session is not less than one hour (or fifty-minute period) of academic instruction, two hours of laboratory training, or three hours workshop.' Likewise, under the Circular, part-time training requires a proportionate number of weekly standard class sessions...In light of the controversy surrounding this issue - already one institution, Wayne State University, has sought and been afforded injunctive relief in Federal District Court (Wayne State University, et al. v. Max Cleland, Administrator, et al., USDC E. D. MICH., CA 77-0973.) - the Committee has required the study and report thereof mandated to be conducted under this paragraph to include comprehensive examination and evaluation of the need for and effectiveness of the 'seat time' requirement."

Further, the Report states on page 112 that:

> "The Committee expects the study and the report thereon to include a sufficient discussion and analysis of the 'seat time' regulation to enable the Committee to determine whether or to what extent such requirement is in need of change."

Objectives of the Study:

The overall objective of the study was to examine the need for legislative and administrative action in regard to the satisfactory progress requirements of title 38, United States Code, and regulations prescribed thereunder; and the "seat-time" requirements prescribed by regulation.

Among the topics considered were the following, many of which were highlighted in discussions of the United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs in Report No. 95-468:

> "...A method whereby only schools involved in non-traditional approaches might be made subject to unsatisfactory progress provisions;
>
> -Whether the standards adopted by the VA on August 12, 1975 are sufficient to assure appropriate payment of GI bill assistance; and
>
> -To what extent State approving agencies, the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), and other appropriate accrediting bodies and State licensing bodies are able to seek or assure that veterans in receipt of GI bill assistance make satisfactory progress in those educational institutions in which enrolled;
>
> -To what extent imposition by the VA of a separate veterans' standard of progress will affect the ability of educational institutions to certify accurately the progress of veteran-students towards the attainment of vocational or educational objectives;
>
> -The extent to which such requirement will impose upon enrolled veterans a more rigorous progress requirement than that being required of nonveteran enrollees;

-Whether educational institutions in their catalogs and bulletins make special (notice of) their policy concerning unsatisfactory progress;

-To what extent these same educational institutions comply with the standards established by title 38 for catalog and bulletin disclosure;

-The need for legislation in regard to any changes recommended; and

-The effect of Amendments made by sections 206 and 307 of P.L. 94-502 which:

> 'amended sections 1674 and 1724 of title 38, in regard to discontinuation of veterans' benefits for unsatisfactory progress. Section 307 amended chapter 35 in regard to the progress required of eligible persons. Thus, for the purposes of the Committee's discussion, comments concerning section 1674 (eligible veterans) are also pertinent to eligible persons under section 1724.
>
> 'Prior to Public Law 94-502, section 1674 mandated the Administrator to "discontinue the educational assistance allowance of an eligible veteran, at any time the Administrator finds that according to the regularly prescribed standards and practices of the educational institution, his (the veteran's) conduct or progress is unsatisfactory." This provision was amended by Public Law 94-502 to provide that "progress will be considered unsatisfactory at any time the eligible veteran is not progressing at a rate that will permit such veteran to graduate within the approved length of the course based on the training time as certified by the Veterans' Administration, unless the Administrator finds that there are mitigating circumstances....' "

In addition:

-The effects on the administration of the GI bill of the "seat time" requirements prescribed by regulations of the Veterans Administration.

In the preparation of the present report and recommendations, the Veterans Administration has drawn on a variety of sources, including its own experience in administering the G.I. Bill, the contemporary views of the educational community gathered at our request by William G. Shannon (see App. A and B), Congressional hearings, and the legislative history.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND PERSPECTIVE

The GI Bill Improvement Act of 1977, P.L. 95-202, was enacted into law on November 23, 1977. Among its provisions was a requirement that the VA Administrator undertake several studies to examine specific facets of the nature, scope or administration of the Federal veterans' education and rehabilitation program.

The focus of one of these studies was to be on the "need for legislative or administrative action" in regard to current law and regulations relating to the discontinuance of the educational assistance allowance of eligible student-veterans for unsatisfactory progress.

Another related subject - "seat time" or contact hours - was added to the study charge during hearings preceding the bill's passage conducted by the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. The VA Administrator was instructed to submit a report of the study "together with such specific recommendations...as the Administrator deems appropriate...to the Presiden and the Congress not later...than...September 30, 1978."

For several years before PL 95-202, standards of progress and "contact time" had emerged as issues of considerable concern to major sectors of the higher education community which was attempting to serve the educational needs of veterans as well as those of all other students - and to the VA, which was charged by Congress with the responsibility for disbursing educational assistance benefits only to eligible and qualified veterans.

Because abuses had taken place wherein veteran-students received Federal funds even though not entitled to educational assistance benefits, Congress and the VA moved to tighten regulations and procedures with respect to the educational community to halt such illegal practices and to prevent their recurrence. The study of standards of progress, with "seat time" issues added, was to help provide information and ideas to the VA Administrator in the preparation of any recommendation he "deemed appropriate" to propose according to the law's requirement.

A major concern, of course, was how to administer a national, massive Federal benefits program so that every eligible and qualified person received educational assistance and those who were not eligible could not take improper and illegal advantage of the system.

Among the broader issues surfacing were: the aims and scope of laws passed by the Congress, the relevant regulations promulgated by the VA and the methods and procedures used by the VA as it attempted to carry out its duties, and the nature and extent of institutional responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on veteran-students' academic progress (and consequently their continuing eligibility for collecting benefits).

Standards of Progress

From its enactment, the current GI bill has provided for discontinuance of educational assistance allowances if, according to the standards and practices of the educational institution, the veteran's progress is unsatisfactory. This provision of law was based on the assumption that schools had and enforced standards of progress and that students not making progress would be subject to dismissal.

During 1975, it came to the attention of the VA and the Congress that a large number of veterans enrolled in accredited institutions of higher learning never attended classes, withdrew from all courses at the end of the term without penalty, and repeated the process term after term, often to the full extent of entitlement. Many schools were not enforcing their published standards of progress, and still others had no published standards at all.

Further, educational practices and policies had undergone considerable change since the early days of veterans' education laws. By the mid 70's, open admissions, nonpunitive grading, liberal withdrawal and re-entry, and other policies intended to attract and encourage students had become quite common.

Thus, in those instances where institutional standards for determining student progress were unenforced or nonexistent, and/or where unstructured and unsupervised modes of educational practice prevailed, it became relatively easy for a veteran intent on misusing the system to obtain hundreds or thousands of dollars in educational benefits by remaining "enrolled" in school although in effect a nonstudent.

According to law (38 U.S.C. 1674, 1681, and 1780), the VA has no authority to pay benefits to a veteran-student unless the veteran is "in pursuit" of his or her course and is "making satisfactory progress" towards its completion. When confronted with abuses of the program in which veteran-students and/or institutions took improper advantage of the GI bill benefits, the VA was required to take corrective action.

On August 6, 1975, the VA published revised regulations (VAR 14253) requiring as a condition of approval the State Approving Agency must find that the school enforces a policy relative to standards of progress, and that such standards must be specific enough to determine the point in time when benefits should be discontinued when a veteran ceases to make satisfactory progress. The State Approving Agencies were asked to established minimum standards of progress for the schools in their respective jurisdictions. The intent was to assure that all courses or subjects attempted by a veteran would be considered in determining his or her progress.

The revised regulations could not be implemented immediately. The State Approving Agencies needed time to develop minimum standards and communicate them to the schools. The schools had to develop or refine their own standards and submit them to the SAA for approval. Many schools resisted what they perceived to be an unwarranted intrusion by the VA on their academic freedom. Nevertheless, toward the end of 1976 many schools had come into compliance.

Then, on October 15, 1976, Public Law 94-502 was enacted, amending 38 U.S.C. 1674, the provision of law relative to unsatisfactory progress. The amendment provided, among other things, that unless the VA finds there are "mitigating circumstances", progress will be considered unsatisfactory at any time the veteran is not progressing at a rate that will permit such veteran to graduate within the approved length of the course based on the training time as certified to the VA. This seemingly simple provision proved to be exceedingly difficult for the VA and the schools to implement, since schools had to make separate evaluations and determinations for veterans and non-VA students.

Additionally Public Law 95-202, directed that the VA conduct a study of the need for legislative or administrative action in regard to unsatisfactory progress.

Contact Time (Seat Time)

In adding the problems related to "seat time" as a part of the mandated study on standards of progress, the Congress took cognizance of both the VA's authority to establish standards for course measurement and pursuit and the controversy over the VA's exercise of this authority.

Broadly, this "seat time" controversy involves interpretation of the collegiate course measurement criteria embodied in 38 U.S.C. 1788(a)(4). Some within the educational community contend that section 1788(a)(4) requires that the VA pay full-time educational benefits when the school, not the VA, determines that the veteran is pursuing a full-time (e.g. 12 semester hour) course. It is the VA's statutory role, however, to determine the appropriate rate of benefits to be paid based upon its interpretation of the type, measurement, and actual pursuit of instruction for which credit-hour enrollment is certified. We would point out that the Senate Report (Senate Report No. 95-468, pages 105-6) noted: "...[T]he VA has now and will continue to have a statutory responsibility to assure the appropriate payment of GI bill educational assistance."

The VA implemented section 1788(a)(4) by requiring that a semester hour enrollment must be supported by a minimum number of class sessions of weekly pursuit, and asserts that this interpretation is consistent with the plain meaning of the terms "quarter- or semester-hour basis" and "semester hours or the equivalent" used in such statute. Historically, American colleges and universities have defined a semester hour as requiring one scheduled hour (or 50 minute session) of classroom lecture per week for the length of the semester for one semester hour of credit. For laboratory courses, two hours of scheduled laboratory classes per week are required for one semester hour of credit. Thus, it is the VA position that section 1788(a)(4) applies only to courses offered on this basic measurement standard, defined in terms of weekly class sessions. It is this traditional standard which has been and continues to be the basis for quantitative measurement of collegiate course pursuit prevalent throughout the educational community.

Additionally, it should be noted that collegiate lecture courses traditionally require two hours of outside preparation for each hour of class (see documentation in chapter 3 below). Consequently, a student enrolled for 12 semester hours would be required to devote 36 hours per week (12 class sessions plus 24 hours of class preparation) toward his or her educational pursuit. The VA firmly believes that the Congress, in enacting 38 U.S.C. 1788(a)(4), found that such expenditure of time in degree pursuit was comparable to that required for full-time pursuit of other types of training, and would effectively preclude outside full-time employment. Therefore, this full-time pursuit merited the additional allowance afforded by the full-time institutional benefit rate.

Since enactment of the first GI bill, it has been the consistent policy and practice of the VA to pay full-time benefits only for full-time pursuit, as directed by the law. Under the World War II GI bill, 12 semester hours was considered a full-time course load for purposes of veterans benefits payments. The rationale for this was that 12 hours of class plus 24 hours of outside preparation equalled 36 hours per week, and thus full-time. Under the Korean conflict GI bill, the full-time requirement was increased to 14 semester hours and VA regulations required 14 standard class sessions per week for full-time benefits. Under the current GI bill, a minimum of 12 semester hours is considered full-time, and VA policy, although not initially expressed in regulatory form, continues to require an equal number of weekly class sessions for full-time benefit payment.

The initial absence of a class session regulation implementing the current GI bill derived from the VA's assumption that practically all accredited college and universities assigned credit on the basis of the number of class sessions per week. This assumption, however, became invalid due to certain changes in educational practices. For example, a few schools, in their zeal to recruit veterans, structured special programs primarily for veterans which broke from traditional standards of course pursuit. These schools then promised full-time benefits based on 12 semester or quarter hours of credit, which credits, however, were diluted to require far fewer than 12 class sessions of instruction per week. Some schools based 12 credits on as little as eight or nine class sessions per week, and six was not unheard of. In brief, the VA found that some schools had made it possible for veterans to receive full-time benefits for considerably fewer hours of attendance than was contemplated by the Congress when it established the statutory benefit levels. Consequently, the VA responded by amending VA Regulation 14272(D) (October 26, 1976) to add the current class session requirement, thus insuring that full-time benefits would be paid only for full-time pursuit as intended by the Congress.

It should be emphasized that the Federal policy and pertinent regulation do not require schools to change their policies regarding the granting of credit to students. Rather, they establish the policy under which veterans benefits will be paid as well as the amount which is payable. The Congress has established different benefit rates for different types and rates of educational pursuit, and it is the VA's responsibility to implement such Congressionally mandated standards for benefit payment. For traditional undergraduate programs using the one credit hour for one hour of class per week criterion, full-time benefits are authorized pursuant to section 1788(a)(4), 38 U.S.C. For nontraditional programs, the Congress has established separate payment criteria.

For example, section 1682(e), 38 U.S.C., and VA Regulation 14280 recognize independent study as a delivery mode different from the conventional classroom mode, and provide a rate of payment at less than full-time. Independent study programs are characterized by few or sometimes no required classes. It is therefore inappropriate to apply class session criteria to such programs. Where only a few classes are included in a program, some schools insist that the program is measureable as full-time under section 1788(a)(4). The VA has determined that such programs are properly classed as independent study programs and hence come within the Congressionally mandated payment for such programs. In such cases the real measurement problem involves classification or terminology.

Other types of nontraditional programs raise questions about the application of class session requirements. A case in point is the weekend program and variations thereof. A course may be given on two or three successive weekends, concentrating as much class time in such brief periods as would normally be provided in a standard length semester. The problem in measuring such courses for payment purposes is not related to the number of credits assigned to the course compared with the amount of class time provided. Rather, in the view of the VA, the measurement problem is related to the actual period of time during which the course is pursued. The law (38 U.S.C. 1780(a)) provides that no amount shall be paid to a veteran for any period when such veteran is not pursuing the course in accordance with the regularly prescribed standards and practices of the institution and the requirements of Chapters 34, 35, and 36, 38 U.S.C. Where the school requires pursuit of the course for only 2 weeks, the VA interprets the law as limiting full-time benefit payment to the 2-week period of actual pursuit. However, it is the school's view that the veteran is entitled to payment for the length of the entire semester within which such 2-week period falls. Thus, the controversy involving weekend programs often does not relate to the rate of benefit payment based on class session requirements, but to determination of the extent of payment based on the period of pursuit.

Increasingly, schools are resorting to litigation to support their position that only the school can determine the full-time or part-time status of a student and, thus, determine the appropriate rate of payment by its certification of training. And, in the Wayne State University case, cited above, the Federal district court stated that "...it appears that the Congress did not foresee and did not provide for the problems that would arise when institutions of higher learning certify as full-time, courses which do not require classroom 'contact' hours which are equivalent to the number of credit hours awarded to students upon completion of the course." 440 F. Supp. at 818. In our appeal of this ruling, we have argued that section 1788(a)(4) clearly must be construed as setting forth this traditional measurement standard. Nevertheless, given the current controversy, further definition and classification of nontraditional programs for the purposes of GI Bill benefit payment would appear to be in order.

The next two chapters discuss the standards of progress and "seat time" in more depth and present the experience of the Veterans Administration as well as the views expressed in the survey (Appendix B).

CHAPTER 2

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

I

It is clear that from the enactment of the current G.I. bill (PL 89-358), the law has required that for continued payment of education benefits, a veteran make satisfactory progress, and that educational institutions report unsatisfactory progress. It is also clear that the law assumed that all schools, including institutions of higher learning, had and enforced standards of progress. When the current education law was enacted in 1966, that assumption was undoubtedly valid. However, over the intervening years, changes in educational philosophies, policies, and practices made abuses possible from mere reliance on that assumption.

The proliferation of administrative and legislative actions taken in attempting to curb abuse of the education program is so well known that repetition is not warranted. In retrospect, some of the actions taken have had salutary effects. Others have generated confusion and some bitterness. The time is ripe for review, reflection, and refinement.

II

The VA Regulations (VA Regulations 14253 and 14277) pertaining to standards of progress, approved in 1975, although not a total solution to the problem, began a process of curbing abuses. Some of the PL 94-502 amendments furthered this process, while others proved to be less useful. The instructions the VA published to implement the amendments proved to be complex and cumbersome, and generated resistance and resentment on the part of the educational community. The VA, working with members of the education community, later simplified the published instructions. However, the further instructions and revisions made necessary by the PL 95-202 amendments exacerbated the situation in the view of many school officials.

The colleges and universities now generally assert that establishing standards of progress is strictly an educational function, and should be left to the schools and State approving agencies. This concept, of course, is basic to section 1674, 38 U.S.C. Most institutions of higher learning now have standards of progress, and most, to varying degrees, are enforcing them according to the respondents. How well such standards alone serve the purpose of curbing abuses of the GI bill is another matter. But school's standards of progress need not be the only bulwark.

III

Among the amendments to section 1780(a), 38 U.S.C., enacted by PL 94-502, was subparagraph (4), which provides that no amount of educational assistance allowance shall be paid for a course for which the grade assigned is not used in computing the requirements for graduation, including a course from which the student withdraws, unless there are mitigating circumstances. This provision plugs the gaps in many institutions' standards and redresses a multitude of practices which have been perceived as abuses. Moreover, this provision is generally not seen by the educational community as one that dictates educational policy, or infringes on the institutions' academic freedom. In short, it is an effective curb on abuses with which the schools can live.

On the other hand, PL 94-502 amended sections 1674, and 1724, 38 U.S.C., to equate progress with completing the course in the normal length of time. Even though this provision was ameliorated by the PL 95-202 amendment, which allows the administrator to provide for a longer period of time to complete the course, it appears to be of little value. These provisions impose a large burden on the schools which is not commensurate with the real needs of the VA. The provision also leads to some rather bizarre results, such as a student on the dean's list being terminated for unsatisfactory progress. Some of the respondents in this study contended that a student who has accumulated 13 semester hours of "F" may well have an overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, which hardly seems to be unsatisfactory progress. Moreover, they contended such an accumulation may not require an extension of training time. Where an extension of training time is required of a student who otherwise is making real progress toward his objective, this is not seen as an abuse.

IV

Under sections 1775 and 1776, 38 U.S.C., schools have to have and enforce standards of progress in order to be approved. Under section 1780(a)(4), no payment is made, or if made, payment is recoverable for unit courses not counted toward completion. Proper monitoring of these provisions by the State approving agencies and the VA should eliminate the abuses related to standards of progress. Such monitoring should assure that both the spirit and the letter of the law are being observed. For example, it should be clear to all that where a school's standards of progress, either as published or as practiced, permit the retention of a student who receives nothing but failing grades, such standards do not meet the requirements for approval. It appears that the foregoing PL 94-502 and PL 95-202 amendments to sections 1674 and 1724 can be safely repealed. All of the VA Circulars pertaining to standards of progress could then be simplified and the burdens imposed upon the schools in monitoring student progress could be lessened.

Schools will still be required to report unsatisfactory progress and courses not counted toward graduation requirements. However, such reports can largely be made from records the schools would otherwise maintain for both veterans and nonveterans.

V

The problems originally seen as inherent in nontraditional approaches to "progress" are largely solved by section 1780(a)(4), 38 U.S.C. For example, under nonpunitive grading systems, where no credit is earned for a unit course, and a grade for that course is not considered in computing graduation requirements, any payment for such course would be recoverable.

VI

Separate standards of progress for veterans increase the record keeping burden of schools and invite charges of discrimination. It is therefore preferable to be able to rely on the school's standards which are applicable to all students and are, in fact, enforced. The original purpose of requiring schools to have and to enforce standards of progress was to prevent abuse. That abuse was typified by the veteran who continued to receive benefits semester after semester although he made little or no progress toward his objective. What made this possible was school practice permitting unlimited withdrawals and other nonpunitive grading practices. Prior to the enactment of PL 94-502 the VA could control such abuse only by requiring that the school adopt different standards for veterans where existing standards would not suffice. The effect was to require that all courses attempted by the veteran be considered in assessing progress, whether or not for school purposes a nonpunitive grade would be considered.

The new section 1780(a)(4) now covers this problem area, and a school's standards of progress (which must include conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress), approved by the State approving agency under section 1775 or 1776, 38 U.S.C., can now be relied on even though a nonpunitive grading system is employed.

VII

The VA cooperated with the Federal Interagency Committee on Education and several higher education associations in the June 1978 publication of Keeping Your School or College Catalog in Compliance with Federal Laws and Regulations. This pamphlet, mailed to more than 10,000 schools and colleges, includes information on catalog requirements under the VA education programs, and its broad distribution will help assure compliance. Educational institutions are making slow progress in meeting the catalog requirements of PL 94-502 (38 U.S.C. 1775). Most colleges require long lead times to update and republish their catalogs. Because of high printing costs, many schools publish every two years rather than annually. However, as catalogs are being republished, it is expected that the VA and the State approving agencies will assure that they are in compliance with the law.

CHAPTER 3

CONTACT TIME - CLASS SESSIONS

I

The publication of the October 26, 1976, amendment to VA Regulation 14272(D), and DVB Circular 20-77-16, made clear that the payment of full-time benefits required a minimum of 12 standard class sessions per week. This accounts for a major part of the negative reaction of many of the educators who furnished input to this study. The regulation and the implementing circular have been described as ultra vires and as an infringement on the educational institutions' academic freedom. Not only has a hue and cry been raised, but the issues are being litigated by several schools.

II

An historical perspective is necessary in order to assess the need for and the propriety of the regulation. Under the first G.I. bill (PL 78-346), the law did not define full and part-time training for payment purposes. It therefore was necessary for the VA to define full-time training. For collegiate undergraduate courses, this was established as 12 semester hours or more. In a statement dated April 7, 1950, to the Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Subcommittee, the then Administrator, Carl R. Gray, Jr., explained the rationale:

> "...Considering the fact that each credit hour of work in a collegiate institution requires at least 2 hours of preparation per week outside of school, it was clear that a minimum of 12 credit hours of class work plus twice that amount of preparation outside of school would total a minimum of 36 hours per week devoted by the student to his course..."

The regulation, included in VA instruction No. 4, Title II, Public Law 346, 78th Congress, provided as to full-time courses:

> "In collegiate institutions which use a standard unit of credit recognized by accrediting associations, a full-time course during the regular school year will consist of twelve or more standard semester hours of credit for a semester... It is assumed that each hour of credit requires three clock hours of the student's time each week..."

It is apparent that the regulation relied on the then commonly accepted definition of a semester hour, which was also the standard used by most accrediting bodies. Under that definition and standard, a semester hour of credit was based on one scheduled class and two hours of outside preparation per week for each week of the semester. On this basis, 12 semester hours represented 36 hours per week of student effort, a level of study demanding the major portion of the standard work week, and hence full-time.

Under the Korean conflict G.I. bill (PL 82-550), the law established 14 semester hours as full-time. In the absence of a definition of semester or semester hour in the law, those terms were interpreted in accordance with their generally accepted meanings. VA Regulation 12066(D), implementing 38 U.S.C. 1633(a)(3), provided that:

> (1) An undergraduate course in a collegiate institution shall be measured on a credit-hour basis...
>
> (2) Courses referred to in subdivision (1) of this subparagraph when of regular semester, term, or quarter duration will be measured as follows:
>
> > (a) Full-time--a minimum of 14 semester hours or the equivalent...
>
> (3) Where the course described in subdivision (1) of this subparagraph is of less than a regular semester, term, or quarter duration...:
>
> > (a) Full-time--the number of credit hours for which the veteran must be registered in order to be considered pursuing full-time training is that number which requires at least 14 standard class sessions of attendance per week...

Since the standard semester hour of credit then in use by undergraduate collegiate institutions and their accrediting associations was based on one class session per week for each hour of credit, it was assumed that 14 semester hours required 14 standard class sessions for a semester of standard duration.

III

Under the current G.I. bill (PL 89-358, as amended), the law provides essentially the same measurement criteria. Again, in the absence of statutory definitions, the terms semester and semester hour must be taken to have their ordinary and generally accepted meanings. The Dictionary of Education, Third Edition, McGraw Hill, defines semester: "half of an education academic year, usually 16 to 18 weeks." Semester-hour is defined: "1 hour a week of lecture or class instruction for one semester or its credit equivalent of laboratory field work, or other types of instructions." Also defined in the Dictionary of Education is the term credit hour: "a unit used in measuring and recording the work completed by a student in an institution of higher education (Usually 1 credit hour represents 1 hour's instruction per week in a given subject for a designated number of weeks in a term. There are two main kinds: quarter credit hours and semester credit hours, representing approximately 12 and 18 weeks of instruction, respectively, frequently referred to simply as semester hours or quarter hours; the latter are converted into the former by multiplying them by 2/3." (sic.)

The International Encyclopedia of Higher Education, 1977, Volume 3, Jossey-Bass, describes credit-hour systems:

> "In the United States most colleges and universities grant a degree upon the successful completion of 120 to 128 credits. Each undergraduate course provides a number of credits toward the degree requirement. A combination of credits and hours yields the more common unit of academic progress, the credit hour. Traditionally, a three-credit hour course requires three fifty-minute classroom lectures per week plus six hours of study over ten weeks in the quarter system or fifteen weeks in the semester system. Credits for laboratory work, fieldwork, and internships usually require far more hours of work than do course credits."

Based on this history and definitions the terms semester and semester hours, as used in section 1788(a)(4), 38 U.S.C., are accepted to mean standard semester and standard semester hour. It follows that where an instituion does not have a standard semester or a standard semester hour, its courses are not to be measured under section 1788(a)(4) criteria.

Section 1788(b) provides that the Administrator shall define full-time and part-time training in the case of all types of courses not referred to in subsection (a). It is under this authority that the VA adopted VA Regulation 14272(D), setting forth the class session requirements pejoratively referred to as "seat time."

IV

The data included in the Appendix show that the standard semester hour is still standard at most institutions of higher learning. That is, residential lecture courses are assigned credit based on one semester hour for one hour of class per week. For the preponderance of conventional or traditional programs, the class session requirement therefore poses no problem. We are aware however that some schools do vary from the standard. Before discussing how such schools' programs should be treated for payment purposes, it is worthwhile to look at the reasons for the VA's concerns.

V

Obviously, the VA is obliged to implement the intent of the legislation that full-time benefits be paid only for full-time activity. Less obvious to the vast majority of school officials, who are themselves blameless, is the need to prevent abuse of one of the largest financial assistance programs in American education. There have been schools which have designed programs specifically for veterans. Some of these programs offer full-time credit of 12 semester hours but require as little as six to eight hours of class per week with little or no outside preparation.

Admittedly, the number of schools engaging in such practices is limited and represents a small minority of U.S. schools. This has led some officials to question the broad scope of our regulations and the attendant burden they place on all schools. However, we would point out that due process requires that regulations be generally applicable and the VA cannot selectively enforce the law through regulations directed at particular institutions. Nevertheless, where possible, we strive to narrow the scope of regulatory effect through distinctions which are constitutionally acceptable.

VI

It cannot be overemphasized that class session requirements apply only to resident programs involving regularly scheduled lecture/class type of instruction. Attempts to fit nontraditional programs into a traditional mold have led to grave problems. Better methods for identification and measurement of these nontraditional programs must be explored.

VII

Both the law (section 1682(e), 38 U.S.C.) and VA Regulation 1428 distinguish independent study from conventional programs, and provide that payment for pursuit of independent study programs is limited to the less than half-time rate. However, neither the law nor the regulations define independent study. It may be helpful at this point to describe what we mean by independent study as distinguished from institutional resident courses. Institutional resident courses consist of prescheduled classes, with the class meeting with the instructor generally once per week for each semester- or quarter-hour of credit. They are characterized by lectures, student participation, assigned work, and outside preparation.

Independent study programs are variously known as directed studies, external degree programs, university without walls, contract programs, and other descriptive terms. Typically, the student engages in individual research rather than preparation for scheduled lecture classes. He generally works under the supervision of and in consultation with a faculty member. He may be assigned a bibliography and a course outline, or he may develop an individualized course subject to the approval of a faculty advisor. Although there is some contact with faculty members, and in some cases seminars may be required, there is less interaction with faculty and other students than in institutional resident courses.

VIII

In making the distinction between independent study programs and institutional resident programs, no inference is made that one is educationally inferior to the other. The decision to limit payment for independent study programs was the result of actual cases of abuse at a time when the VA was authorizing full-time benefits for 12 semester hours of independent study. These cases involved accredited public and private non-profit institutions. The schools were able to recruit thousands of veterans by offering a vehicle for the receipt of full-time VA benefits for minimal part-time activity. We may be placing a heavy burden on the innocent majority because of the actions of a small minority, but on the other hand that minority may have grown considerably had not prompt action been taken. Because of the limitation on payment for independent study programs, the VA is seen by many as opposed to innovation in education, and as distrustful of the academic integrity of nontraditional programs of education. We would emphasize that the VA is merely implementing the Congressional mandate of different rates of benefits.

IX

Despite appearances, the purpose in differentiating between traditional and nontraditional programs of education is to prevent abuse. Approval by a State approving agency is required for either, and such approval includes a determination of acceptable educational quality. But this does not preclude establishing different rates of payment for different modes of training. Institutional training, cooperative training, correspondence training, and on the job training have different rates of assistance allowance established by law. Despite the rational bases for the differences, some resentment on the part of some segments of the community is apparent.

Cooperative education is a case in point. Cooperative courses combine institutional and job training instruction. Because the rate of payment for cooperative courses is lower than for institutional courses, schools resort to ingenious attempts to have periods of work experience classified as institutional courses. That they have succeeded to a great extent is evident from VA Regulation 14265(F), which authorizes resident institutional rates for certain job experience courses. Although cooperative education is far from new (see 38 U.S.C. 1682(a)), some job experience programs are now being labeled as nontraditional.

X

Another aspect of the measurement for payment purposes problem relates to periods of pursuit rather than to class session requirements. Some schools, otherwise organized on a quarter or semester basis, offer one or more short, intensified courses of very brief duration. These may be offered sequentially during a regular quarter or semester, or they may be offered concurrently with quarter- or semester-length courses. In order to put VA's approach to measurement of such courses in perspective, let's look at the original premise: full-time benefits should be paid only for full-time activity. A corollary to this is: full-time benefits should be paid only for the period of full-time activity.

The intent of the law is aptly expressed in section 1780(a), 38 U.S.C.

> ...no amount shall be paid - (1) to any eligible veteran or eligible person enrolled in a course which leads to a standard college degree for any period when such veteran or person is not pursuing such veteran's or person's course in accordance with the regularly established policies and regulations of the educational institution and the requirements of this chapter or of chapter 34 or chapter 35 of this title;...

XI

Now let's apply the premise and the law to an example: A veteran is enrolled in an institution of higher learning operating on a quarter system. The veteran is registered for three unit courses of four credit hours each. Two of the unit courses are scheduled in the evening by the school for the duration of the quarter, 12 weeks. The third unit course is scheduled by the school for only two consecutive weekends. The class meets all day Saturday and Sunday each week for two weeks, and the school requires no work in this course before or after those two weekends. Therefore the actual duration of the weekend course is nine days.

It is obvious that during that nine day period the veteran is pursuing a total of 12 quarter hours (the weekend course plus two other courses) and should be paid at the full-time rate. It is also obvious, at least to the VA, that during the remainder of the 12 week quarter, before and after the two weekends, the veteran is pursuing but eight quarter hours, and should be paid at a less than full-time rate for those periods. In terms of section 1780(a)(1), except for the nine days, the veteran is not pursuing the weekend course in accordance with the regularly established policies and regulations of the educational institution, which only require nine days of pursuit. Full-time benefits should be paid only for the period of full-time activity. Note that the analysis of this example required no reference to contact or "seat" time.

The foregoing example is based on the Wayne State University case, Wayne State University v. Cleland, No. 77-0973 (E.D. Mich. Sept. 30, 1977) appeals entered Nos. 78-1141, 78-1142 (6th Cir. Oct. 18, 1977; Feb. 15, 1978). In that case, the school is contending that the VA is bound, for payment purposes, by the school's determination of what constitutes full-time, and that section 1788(a)(4), defining 12 semester or quarter hours as full-time, is controlling. It is the VA's position (see paragraph III of this chapter)(a) that measurement criteria in section 1788(a)(4), apply only to standard semesters and quarters and to standard semester hours and quarter hours; (b) that the VA is granted authority under section 1788(b) to define full- and part-time training for terms not of standard duration; and (c) that payment of benefits for courses, whether under section 1788(a) or (b) is limited to the period of actual required course pursuit determined in accordance with section 1780(a) and (g).

XII

Some educators claim that there is also an issue of academic freedom involved here. Some segments of the educational community see VA's efforts to measure courses for payment purposes as attempts to restrict schools to conventional programs and delivery modes. The VA fully supports the position that academic matters are the business of the educational institutions, the accrediting associations, and the State approving agencies. The payment of benefits, we believe, is the VA's business. Since the VA is charged with the responsibility to pay educational benefits to eligible persons, it should be axiomatic that the VA has the authority to determine and the responsibility to pay the correct amount of benefits authorized by statute.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

I

The issues involving Standards of Progress and Measurement for Payment Purposes have resulted in a serious deterioration of the relationship between the Veterans Administration and the higher education community. The VA would like to restore that relationship to one of mutual trust and cooperation. As a major step in that direction, the VA began consultation with members of the academic world on major policy issues, including distribution of draft publications for comment prior to adoption. We have also broadened the base of the Administrator's Advisory Committee on Education and Rehabilitation to include representatives of groups which have been highly critical of the VA. We have committed ourselves to making publications and regulations more intelligible, and we hereby renew and reaffirm that commitment. We recognize that controversy can be avoided by use of clear and concise language.

Lead time available to the VA to implement new legislation has often been too brief or nonexistent. The VA is obliged to implement laws in accordance with the effective dates assigned. However, due to extremely short time frames, the VA often cannot issue implementing publications until well after such dates, and this results in an obvious source of friction and dissatisfaction.

II

We find that the amendments to section 1775 and 1780, 38 U.S.C., enacted by Sections 504, 505 and 506 of PL 94-502, together with administrative actions previously taken by the VA have closed off many avenues of abuse. Section 1775, 38 U.S.C., now requires that an accredited school's catalog must be certified as true and correct and must state its progress requirements and must include the information required by sections 1776(b)(6) and (7). Thus, the VA believes that standards of progress now in effect in most accredited collegiate institutions, taken together with these amended provisions of law, are generally sufficient to avoid abuse.

III

We find that the most troublesome aspects of the standards of progress issues are related to the PL 94-502 and PL 95-202 amendments to sections 1674 and 1724, 38 U.S.C. These amendments impose considerable administrative burdens on the schools that appear to outweigh their utility. They also appear to produce unjust results in some cases.

IV

We find that there is a continuing need for regulations implementing the intent of the law that full-time benefits should be paid only for periods of full-time educational activity. We also find that there should be additional Congressional clarification in the law concerning non-standard measurement criteria, including those for non-traditional programs and delivery modes of education.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

I

We suggest the following legislative changes for Congressional consideration:

1.

Eliminate course completion time as a statutory factor in monitoring the progress of a veteran or eligible person by amending sections 1674 and 1724, 38 U.S.C.

2.

Congressional reaffirmation of (1) the VA's traditional authority under current law; and (2) the VA's implementation of the traditional statutory distinctions made in benefit levels based upon the type of program and periods of course pursuit.

3.

Congressional clarification of (1) those areas in dispute; and (2) the measurement and the amount of benefits payable for nontraditional programs.

II

We recommend the following administrative changes:

1.

Further clarify that the standards of progress required by sections 1775 and 1776, 38 U.S.C., must include conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress, and that approval must be denied or withdrawn where a school's policies or practices permit retention of a student not making progress.

2.

Further define for the purpose of sections 1682(a) and 1732(c)(3), 38 U.S.C., the term "independent study."

3.

Further define for the purpose of section 1780(g), "enrollment" and "enrollment period", "pursuit", and "attendance".

4.

Re-examine for the purposes of section 1788(b), "full-tim training" and "part-time training" in the case of all types of courses not referred to in section 1788(a), including courses offered on a nonstandard quarter- or semester-hour basis, and including courses offered through nontraditional delivery modes.

APPENDIX A

I

FOCUS AND SCOPE OF DATA GATHERING PROJECT CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM G. SHANNON

The data gathering project called for concentration on the experience, perceptions and recommendations of individuals in a broad variety of institutional activities in or directly related to veterans' education and the administration of the GI bill benefits program. Major emphasis of the data gathering project was to be placed on postsecondary education leading to degrees.

The data gathering project was consciously aimed at obtaining the broadest possible national geographic coverage that the restrictive time schedule of 70 days would permit. Consultations were to be arranged with major national veterans organizations, State Approving Agencies, state advisory and coordinating agencies dealing with higher education, national education associations, accreditation bodies (including the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation), and many other individuals or groups expressing interest in veterans' education and the pertinent Federal benefits programs. Of course, primary emphasis would be placed on consultations with officers and other representatives of colleges, universities, and institutes - both public and private - that provide postsecondary education for veterans.

Efforts were not directed to designing and implementing a study using a national representative sampling technique which would attempt to obtain and classify data according to various characteristics of institutions and agencies. Further, since the Congressional mandate called for a comprehensive investigation of the need for any changes in pertinent laws or regulations based on the experiences of persons who deal with or are affected by them, it was decided that a scientific sampling technique was not essential, especially if successful efforts could be made to obtain the view and judgments of involved and concerned individuals in colleges, universities, and particular agencies and offices in many locations across the nation.

Therefore, the project design gave particular attention to the inclusion of participants from all parts of the country who were working in a broad variety of educational institutions and related agencies.

It was decided at the start to keep the record open as long as possible and to invite comments and ideas from all interested parties to achieve the broadest possible participation. In this way, interested individuals who were not able to attend meetings with members of the study team would be able to submit their ideas or recommendations through the mails or by telephone.

II

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

In consultation with VA officials, it was decided that a project relying primarily on questionnaires would not be feasible or particularly appropriate. More importantly, it was believed that an open discussion format might well provide a better setting for the free flow of ideas and reactions, especially in view of the many anxieties and concerns already expressed to the VA, particularly by educational institutions, about rules and regulations being imposed in the operation of veteran educational benefits programs.

Discussion Guide

A discussion guide was drafted for the use of the project team to help focus attention on the most important questions and issues and to provide a common core of responses and comment that would be useful in the preparation of the final report. (See Appendix p. 312 for copy of the Guide).

Major elements listed for review included: standards of progress statutes and regulations, "seat time" regulations, keeping catalogs and bulletins in compliance with Federal law and regulations, safeguards against abuses of benefits programs, experiences with record keeping related to veterans' education and the GI bill as compared with that for other students, and special recommendations dealing with these topics and also with other VA procedures and policies related to the GI bill.

The project team fully anticipated that they would hear about the many problems that representatives of educational institutions and others are experiencing in the operation of the veterans' Federal educational benefits program. However, the discussion guide emphasized the need to concentrate attention primarily on any and all recommendations individuals cared to make in regard to Federal legislative or administrative action they deemed appropriate concerning the topics under discussion.

Following the issuance of the project contract on May 12, 1978, consultations were held with the staff of both House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs and the representatives of many higher education associations, organizations and agencies, especially those with headquarters in Washington, D.C. Throughout the period of the project, additional associations, veterans' groups, agencies and institutions were also consulted. These offices and groups included the following:

Higher Education Associations

American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education

Association of American College
California Community and Junior Colleges Association
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
Pennsylvania State Association of Community Colleges

Also:

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation
Education Commission of the States
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Veterans Organizations

American Legion
American Veterans Committee
Disabled American Veterans
National Association of Concerned Veterans
Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee - Connecticut
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Vets House, Inc. - Wisconsin
Vets for Vets - Wisconsin

State Higher Education Advisory and Coordinating Agencies

California Community Colleges
California State University and Colleges
Connecticut State Board of Regents
Florida Department of Education - Community College Division
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia
Illinois Community College Board
Maryland State Board for Community Colleges
State of Minnesota Community College Board
The New York State Department of Higher Education
State University of New York

Agencies Concerned with GI Bill Administration

American Association of Minority Veterans Program Administrators
National Association of Veterans Program Administrators
Veterans Program Administrators of Washington

State Approving Agencies

Alabama Department of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
Florida Department of Education
Georgia Department of Veterans Affairs
Hawaii State Postsecondary Education Commission
Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs
Indiana Commission on Postsecondary Proprietary Education
Kentucky Department of Education
Louisiana Department of Education
Michigan Department of Education
Minnesota State Approving Agency
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Montana Office of Public Instruction
Nebraska State Approving Agency
Nevada Commission on Postsecondary Institutional Accreditation
New Jersey Department of Education
New York State Approving Agency
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency
Oregon Department of Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
South Carolina Department of Education
Tennessee Department of Education
Texas Education Agency
Washington State Commission for Vocational Education
West Virginia Board of Regents
Wisconsin Educational Approving Board

Utah State Board of Regents (received late)

Spirit of Cooperation

Initially, the project design called for visits to approximately 50 selected college and university campuses, as well as to State Approving Agency offices, state agencies, etc. However, early in the planning stage it became clear to the project team that such an approach would not accommodate the scores of individuals in institutions and agencies who expressed interest in contributing to the study. Arrangements were then made, through the cooperation of many individuals and offices across the country, for group meetings to which large numbers of concerned and interested persons were then invited. This approach was followed in most instances and guaranteed the inclusion in discussion of more than three times as many agency and institutional representatives than would otherwise have been possible. The groups usually included presidents, deans, registrars and other institutional officials, in addition to State Approving Agency officials and staff members of veteran affairs offices. On very short notice, sometimes less than a week, individuals not only attended the meetings but also submitted lengthy written materials. Their deep interest and sincerity were attested to by the amounts of "seat time" they devoted to the all-day sessions. In addition, team members also visited a number of individual campuses for comprehensive discussions with staff as well as veteran-students.

Preparations for travel and for the numerous meetings scheduled were made during the period from May 12th to June 4th. The actual trips were begun during the first week of June and continued throughout that month. Meetings and consultations included the following:

Long Beach, California - June 13, 1978

California State University and Colleges
  Chancellor's Office
California State University at:
  Dominguez Hills
  Fresno
  Fullerton
  Hayward
  Long Beach
  Los Angeles
  Sacramento
  San Bernadino
  Stanislaus
California State Polytechnic University at:
  Pomona
  San Luis Obispo
San Diego State University
San Jose State University
San Francisco State University
University of Southern California

Sacramento, California - June 15, 1978

California Community Colleges
Chabot College
Citrus College
Grossmont College
Los Angeles City College
Merced College
Santa Clara County Counsel's Office
San Jose City College
Santa Monica College

San Francisco, California - June 17, 1978

Meeting with the Board of Directors of the National Association of Concerned Veterans.

Hartford, Connecticut - June 26, 1978

Central Connecticut State College
Connecticut State Department of Education
Norfolk State Technical College
Northwestern Connecticut Community College
Office of Veteran Affairs Advisory Committee
Post College
Southern Connecticut State College
State Board of Higher Education
Thames Valley State Technical College
University of New Haven
Veterans Administration Regional Office
Wesleyan University

Georgetown, Delaware - June 23, 1978

Delaware Technical and Community College

Newark, Delaware - June 30, 1978

University of Delaware

Tallahassee, Florida - June 26, 1978

Chipola Junior College
Florida Division of Community Colleges
Florida Junior College
Florida Junior College at Jacksonville
Gulf Coast Community College
Lake City Community College
North Florida Junior College
Okaloosa-Walton Junior College
Pensacola Junior College
Santa Fe Community College
State of Florida, Department of Education
Tallahassee Community College

Tampa, Florida - June 27, 1978

Brevard Community College
Central Florida Community College
Hillsboro Community College
Lake Sumter Community College
Pasco-Hernando Community College
Polk Community College
Seminole Community College
St. Petersburg Community College
Valencia Community College

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida - June 28, 1978

Broward Community College
Edison Community College
Indian River Community College
Miami-Dade Community College District
Miami-Dade Community College - North
Miami-Dade Community College - South
Nova University
Palm Beach Junior College
University of Miami

Atlanta, Georgia - June 29, 1978

Southern Association of Schools and Colleges
Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia

Chicago, Illinois - June 14, 1978

Chicago Urban Skills Institute
City Colleges of Chicago
College of Lake County
Kennedy-King College
The Loop College
Loyola University
Malcolm X College
Morton College
Northeastern Illinois University
Oakton Community College
Olive Harvey College
Prairie State College
R. J. Daley College
Thornton Community College
Truman College
Triton College
University of Chicago
University of Illinois - Chicago Circle

Maryland - June 12 - 29th, 1978

Community College of Baltimore
Harford Junior College
Prince Georges Community College
University of Maryland
University College - University of Maryland
Maryland State Board for Community Colleges

Lansing, Michigan - June 20, 1978

Bay De Noc Community College
Delta College
Detroit Institute of Technology
Detroit College of Business
Ferris State College
Grand Valley State College
Highland Park Community College
Jackson Community College
Kellogg Community College
Kirkland Community College
Lansing Community College
Lewis College of Business
Nazareth College
Northwestern Michigan College
Northern Michigan University
Oakland University
State Department of Education
State Technical Institute
The University of Michigan
Walsh College
Washtenaw Community College
Wayne State University
Wayne County Community College
Western Michigan University

Minneapolis, Minnesota - June 12, 1978

College of St. Thomas
Dunwoody Institute
Mankato State University
Minneapolis Area Vocational Technical Institute
Minnesota State Approving Agency
Normandale Community College
State Community College Board
State University Board
University of Minnesota

Camden, New Jersey - June 27, 1978

Department of Higher Education State Approving Agency
New Jersey Institute of Technology
Rider College
Rutgers University - Camden
Rutgers University - New Brunswick
Stockton State College

New York City, New York - June 22, 1978

Bronx Community College
City University of New York
College of Staten Island
New York City Community College

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania - June 28, 1978

Community College of Alleghany County
Community Colleges of Philadelphia
Harrisburg Area Community College
Pennsylvania State Association of Community Colleges
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Temple University

Dallas, Texas - June 23, 1978

Bishop College
Cedar Valley College
Dallas County Community College District
Eastland College
East Texas State University
El Centro College
Mountain View College
National Association of Concerned Veterans
National Association of Veteran Program Administrators
Richland College
Tarrant County Junior College (Northeast)
Tarrant County Junior College
University of Texas at Dallas
University of Dallas
North Texas State University

Fairfax and Annadale, Virginia - June 19, 1978

George Mason University
Northern Virginia Community College

Tacoma and Seattle, Washington - June 20 and 21, 1978

Boise State University (Idaho)
Evergreen State College
Everett Community College
Fort Steilacoom Community College
Green River Community College
Southern Oregon Unversity (Oregon)
Tacoma Community College
Veterans Program Administrators of Washington
Washington State Approving Agency
University of Washington

Madison, Wisconsin - June 8, 1978

Educational Approval Board
Madison Area Technical Institute
Milton College
University of Wisconsin at:
    Eau Claire
    Madison
    Stevens Point
Vets House, Inc.
Wisconsin School of Electronics

Washington, D.C. - June 15, 1978

George Washington University

In summary, the team members visited 28 cities in 16 states and the District of Columbia and received information and recommendations from an additional 17 states. They spoke directly in person with approximately 250 representatives from 180 colleges and universities (both public and private), and various education offices and agencies. Comments were received by mail from additional institutions and individuals. Twenty-eight State Approving Agencies either participated in the meetings or submitted comments and recommendations. In addition, several regional VA offices were represented at the meetings or were visited at their request and contributed helpful information and suggestions.

APPENDIX B

State of Alabama
Department of Education
State Office Building
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

Wayne Teague
State Superintendent of Education

July 5, 1978

Mr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Md. 20795

Re: "Shannon Study"

Dear Sir:

The Alabama State Approving Agency was asked to respond to certain questions involving State Approving Agencies and institutions. Listed below is our response:

1. Question: How do institutions generally measure progress?

   Answer: Most Alabama institutions require students to maintain the grade or grade-point average required for graduation. Some technical schools require the successful completion of certain phases of instruction. Most institutions of higher learning require the student to successfully complete a certain number of credit hours in a given time period.

2. Question: a. How do institutions in your state measure full-time?

   Answer: All of the institutions of higher learning in Alabama consider a class load of at least 12 credit hours as full-time training at the undergraduate level. On the graduate level the least number of credit hours recognized as full-time training is eight. State technical colleges require 30 clock hours per week of training for full-time training. Cosmetology, nursing programs, and medical and dental specialty programs usually require 40 hours per week for full-time training.

   Question: b. On what basis do institutions assign credit relative to class time?

   Answer: Most institutions of higher learning award one credit hour for one hour of lecture per week; or two hours of lab experience per week; or three hours of shop experience per week.

3. Question: What problems do institutions have relative to V.A. record keeping requirements?

Answer: Many schools find that they have to hire additional staff to handle all the V.A. reports required. Lack of adequate staffing causes some schools difficulty in being able to monitor withdrawals, changes in class loads, attendance, or adherence to program requirements. Determining last day of attendance is extremely difficult for some schools who have liberal attendance requirements. Determining how long a veteran will take to complete a program is a task that most schools do not normally require of its staff.

4. Question: Do any of your schools have a computerized system for record keeping? If so, what is it?

Answer: Many schools, particularly the larger ones, use computers to assist in records keeping. Most computer programs show that student is a vet, what program he is in, what courses he has taken, his current schedule, his cumulative hours passed or failed, his cumulative grade-point average and his academic status (clear, probation, suspension, etc.). Some computers furnish certifying officials with drop/add information, withdrawals, mid-term grades and confirmation of enrollments.

5. Question: Do schools have safeguards for curbing veterans' abuses?

Answer: In 1975 every school in Alabama was required to submit to the S.A.A. their Standards of Progress and in most cases, their method of implementation. These had to be approved by the S.A.A. Schools constantly monitor veterans' records to see that they are abiding by school regulations. Schools have instructed instructors and office personnel about abuses and how to recognize them. Recent V.A. and S.A.A. compliance visits indicate that most abuses have been detected and means developed to prevent recurrence.

6. Question: Do you have any recommendations for changes in the law or V.A. regulations regarding satisfactory progress?

Answer: We feel that the Appendix O, revised requirement that "A veteran be reported as unsatisfactory at the time he accumulates unsatisfactory punitive grades in more hours than the school's minimum full-time requirement" is not realistic. We have indications from colleges that most students could still graduate within the required length of program with the required grade-point average even if they accumulated that number of unsatisfactory hours.

Yours very truly,

E. C. Stephens, Program Director
State Approving Agency
Executive Plaza - Suite 7
817 South Court Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

ECS/vc

SURVEY OF VCIP COORDINATORS
for the
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE of the CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

1. Have you received copies of the latest revision of Appendix O (DVB Circular 20-76-84 on Unsatisfactory Progress) dated February 3, 1978?

   YES ___________ NO ___________

2. Have you read it?

   YES ___________ NO ___________

3. Are there parts of the revised version of Appendix O which you do not understand?

   YES ___________ NO ___________

4. What part(s) do you find to be unclear?

   ____

   ____

   ____

   If necessary, please continue on the back.

5. Can you implement the revised Appendix O at your school?

   YES ___________ NO ___________

6. If not, please explain.

   ____

   ____

   ____

   If necessary, please continue on the back.

7. If you can implement the revised Appendix O, how difficult do you feel it will be at your institution?

   Very difficult ___________
   Difficult ___________
   Easy ___________
   Very easy ___________

8. If you feel that you can implement the revised version of Appendix O, what do you feel will be the cost to your institution to do so?

   Additional hours per semester ___________
   Additional cost per semester ___________

REPORT OF THE SURVEY OF VCIP COORDINATORS for the CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Question 1. Have you received copies of the latest revision of Appendix O (DVB Circular 20-76-84 on Unsatisfactory Progress) dated February 3, 1978?

Answers:

Yes	23
Not Officially	1
No	8
?	1

Of the 33 colleges who responded, 30.3% had not yet received the latest version of Appendix O from their Veterans Administration Regional Office.

Question 2. Have you read it?

Answers:

Yes	23
No	2

Question 3. Are there parts of the revised version of Appendix O which you do not understand?

Answers:

Yes	15
No	10
No answer	1

Of the 23 VCIP Coordinators who had read Appendix O, 12 (52%) found at least some part of it hard to understand.

Question 4. What part(s) do you find to be unclear?

Answers: Nine comments were received. These included:

(1) "The students are able to satisfy the college's academic standards; however, the VA contends that the student's progress is still unsatisfactory. This is a difficult situation to resolve."

(2) "Paragraph 4b is likely to be construed to imply that schools employing non-punitive grades need to apply for exemption from Appendix O."

(3) "How a waiver may be obtained by an IHL to avoid reporting the data in question, when in fact an IHL must still continue to provide the data."

(4) "Seems to overlap or contradict other appendices issued--need concise wording."

(5) "Appendix 'G' 95-202 Exemption Requirements."

(6) "Contradictory from the first part to the second part."

(7) "All of it as related to college philosophy autonomy and student rights (not mentioned) nor how we can comply without-VA funding."

Calif.

(8) "All. I talked to a VA official and he said VARO's weren't either."
(9) "The whole thing."

In addition, one college reported, "Have applied for a waiver."

Question 5. Can you implement the revised Appendix O at your school?

Answers:

Yes	13
No	11
No need to; could if it were necessary	1

42% of the reporting colleges estimate that they cannot implement Appendix O as currently written.

Question 6. If not, please explain.

Answers: Eleven comments were received. These mainly fell into the categories of:

Inadequate staff	7
Insufficient funding	4
Too time consuming	3
Insufficient resources	1

In addition, one college reported, "President of college has agreed that . . . (college's) standards of progress are adequate." Another reported, "With many problems."

Question 7. If you can implement the revised Appendix O, how difficult do you feel it will be at your institution?

Answers:

Very difficult	8
Difficult	10
Easy	3
Very	0
No answer	3
In between difficult and easy	1

Question 8. If you feel that you can implement the revised version of Appendix O, what do you feel will be the cost to your institution to do so?

Answers: Additional hours per semester:

Highest estimate	2200 hours
Lowest estimate	10
Average estimate	623 (9 replies)
Verbal estimates	"Lots", "Hard to determine but definitely a lot", "very high", "substantial", and "yes"
No answer	10

In addition, one college replied, "Currently being done."

Calif.

Additional cost per semester:

Highest estimate	$20,000
Lowest estimate	$ 40
Average estimate	$ 5,344 (12 replies)
Verbal estimates	"Massive increase", "Hard to determine but definitely a lot", "very high", "substantial", and two "yeses".
No answer	7

APR 2 5 1979

VCIP SURVEY - Calif

105 Community Colleges surveyed.

13 Colleges not now receiving VCIP funding

    6 Colleges have previously lost eligibility

    5 Colleges did not apply this year

    2 Colleges not yet certified.

92 Colleges receiving VCIP funding this year.

68

    39 Colleges doubtful about continued eligibility

    29 Colleges not eligible next year

    24 Colleges anticipate VCIP funding next year.

    (Of the 92 schools:

        42% doubtful about next year

        32% not eligible next year

        26% anticipate continued eligibility)

$3,388,303.00 = Total VCIP funding this year in 92 colleges.

[illegible]

39	doubtful	received	$1,174,203.00 -	34% of total.*
29	No	"	$1,305,461.00 -	39% of total.
24	Yes	"	$ 908,639.00 -	27% of total.*

(* 4 of the 39 doubtful schools had no figures as to amount of VCIP funding, and, therefore, these amounts are NOT included. One of the 24 Yes schools had no figure, which is thus not included.)

Cal. f.

107,291 Total number of Veterans enrolled in 103 colleges.

(2 remaining colleges not yet certified: no figure on veteran enrollment).

4,784 Veterans in the 6 colleges which previously lost eligibility.

= 5% of total veterans.

1,727 Veterans in 5 colleges which did not apply for VCIP funding this year.

= 2% of total veteran enrollment.

100,780 = Total veteran enrollment now covered by VCIP funding in the 92 colleges

= 93%

36,935 Veterans enrolled in the 29 colleges which will not be eligible next year

= 34% of total veteran enrollment (107,291)

72,600

67%

35,695 Veterans enrolled in 39 colleges which are doubtful about continued eligibility.

= 33% of total veteran enrollment (107,291)

28,150 Veterans enrolled in 24 schools anticipating continued eligibility

= 26% of total veteran enrollment (107,291)

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
P.O. Box 1320 HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06101
AREA CODE 203 566-7210

OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS GUIDELINES

RECORDS - KEEPING

Veteran file

1. Adequate records means a permanent set of records which contain copies of:

   a. DD214 (seperation paper from active duty).

   b. Application for veterans education benefits (VA form 22-1990); enrollment certification (VA form 22-1999).

   c. All change of status records (VA form 22-1999b) which cause an increase or decrease in VA benefit payments. The effective date of such change which decreases benefit payments may be based on one or more of the following methods:
      (1) last activity date reflected in the instructor's record;
      (2) last papers submitted;
      (3) last examination completed;
      (4) a student's reasonable statement of last date of class attendance;
      (5) instructor's attendance records.

      Whichever method chosen must be substantiated by documentation in the veteran student's record.

   d. Veterans accountability agreement on official withdrawal policy.

   e. Any correspondence between the college and the veteran regarding educational benefit entitlements. Examples are:
      (1) tutorial authorization by instructor;
      (2) VA work-study agreements or authorizations;
      (3) authorizations for remedial study;
      (4) notices of academic deficiencies or probationary status;
      (5) transfer credits given.

   f. Certification to the college by the veteran that pursuit of courses continues at the rate for which enrolled. (The system must allow the institution to notify the VA within 30 days of the date of any charges in the rate of pursuit affecting the veteran's monthly benefit payment.)

   g. Final grade in each subject for each term, quarter, or semester.

   h. The college maintains transcripts of previous education and training provided the veteran or eligible person notifies the college of previous education and training for which transfer credit may be given. The transcript must clearly indicate each enrollment period showing all subjects undertaken and the final results, i.e. passed, failed, incomplete or withdrawn. The record must also contain, where applicable, VA form 22-1995 (request for change of program or place of training).

Attachment 5

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TALLAHASSEE 32304

RALPH D. TURLINGTON
COMMISSIONER

June 28, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

We enjoyed your visit with us on Monday afternoon, June 26, 1978, and our discussion concerning Standards of Progress.

Ray Buckwalter called three private institutions of higher learning and encouraged them to attend your conference or workshop at Broward Community College Central Campus. Nova University indicated that they would have one of their officials attend and the University of Miami stated that they probably would also send a representative to your workshop today.

We have reviewed the Discussion Guide dated June 2, 1978, which proposed questions to and requests recommendations from the institutions. We shall comment on each topic in general terms expressing our understanding of the institutions' concerns which we have gathered from our supervisory visits.

1. Standards of Progress

   Some institutions in Florida have monitored the veteran/students progress toward completion of a program of education without complaints while most of the institutions feel that this policy infringes upon their academic freedom and would like to have the Law changed to allow the institutions to maintain their academic freedom. Some institution officials have questioned the Veterans Administration (VA) personnel's expertise in strictly educational matters. In general we believe the institutions would like to set their own standards and operate their programs of education without being dictated to by Federal Laws and Regulations.

   We do not believe the institutions object to mitigating circumstances being considered when unsatisfactory progress is reported to the VA.

2. Seat Time

Most institutions of higher learning do not keep attendance and do not feel that progress should be measured on seat time but rather on the grade achieved for the term by the student. The requirement of identifying the last date of attendance does present a problem to most institutions that do not maintain records of class attendance.

3. Record Keeping

Generally, institutions do not like the VA's record keeping requirements. Many institutions utilize computers in their record keeping and those who do not are forced to maintain records manually which require an excessive amount of manpower and time for this accomplishment.

Some institutions use computer printouts two or three times a term and have to rely on the instructors to report the last date of attendance of veterans to the Veterans Affairs office.

4. Safeguards

Most institutions feel that progress and measurement criteria, even though it requires additional manpower and expense, results in a curtailment of abuse of veterans' benefits.

5. Catalogs and Bulletins

We do not believe that most of the institutions object to submitting their Catalogs and certifying them as true and correct in content and policy by an authorized representative of the school, however, the institution officials do become frustrated when confronted with almost daily changes in DVB Circulars and VA Regulations, particularly when many require retroactive actions to be taken.

6. Recommendations

In general, we believe that the institutions would welcome changes in the Public Laws and VA Regulations and DVB Circulars that would reduce their volume of VA record keeping requirements.

We sincerely hope that our comments will, in some small way, assist you in your study of the Standards of Progress and Seat Time Provisions regarding veterans' benefits. We wish you luck on your major undertaking.

Sincerely,

Wallace C Barrett
Wallace C. Barrett
Coordinator, Veterans Approval

WCB:ja

Florida State Dept. of Education

A POSSIBLE APPLICATION OF THE STUDENT PROGRESS QUOTIENT

RATE OF STUDENT PROGRESS

The rate of progress for students in college credit programs is expressed as a quotient computed by dividing the number of credits earned during any given period of time by the number of credits attempted during the same period of time. A student progress quotient is calculated for each term by dividing the number of credits earned with a grade of D or higher by the number of credits in course registrations as of the last date for fee refunds.

MAXIMUM CREDIT LOAD

After the initial terms a student is in college, the number of credits for which she/he is permitted to enroll at any given time during subsequent terms is based on the student's progress quotient for the most recent term (in this or any college) completed prior to registration. The maximum number of credits is calculated by multiplying the student progress quotient by fifteen with the following exceptions:

(a) a student with a progress quotient of 1.0 based on twelve or more credits attempted may be enrolled for up to eighteen credits with the written approval of ____________________.

(b) a student with a term progress quotient of 0.19 or less may register for three credits, provided that this exception shall not be utilized for two consecutive terms without the written approval of ______________________.

Florida -2

(c) a student whose progress quotient for the most recent term results from circumstances determined by ________________ ________ to be beyond her/his control may use the progress quotient for the next preceeding term.

(d) a student whose progress quotient for three full terms or equivalent (45 credits attempted) falls below 0.70 may enroll in further courses only upon approval of ________________.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

A student who is meeting attendance requirements for the courses in which he/she is enrolled and who has a term progress quotient of 0.80 or higher is deemed to be making fully satisfactory progress. A student who is meeting the attendance requirements for the courses in which he/she is enrolled and who has a term progress quotient of less than 0.80 is deemed to be making conditional progress until such time as her/his progress quotient for three full terms or equivalent (45 credits attempted) fall below 0.70. Students who fail to satisfy attendance requirements for the courses in which they enroll and/or students whose progress quotient for three full terms or equivalent is 0.69 or less are deemed to be making unsatisfactory progress.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Faculty members are responsible for advising their students of the minimum levels of participation in course activities required to demonstrate continued enrollment in their courses. Such levels of participation may be

Florida-3

expressed in terms of class attendance, report of coursework completed, student teacher conferences, taking examinations or other relevant activities as demonstrate pursuit by students of course objectives. Faculty members are responsible for reporting to ____________________ every fourteen calendar days the names of any students enrolled in their courses who are failing to meet minimum level of participation in their courses.

Department of Veterans Service
Veterans Building - State Capitol
Atlanta
30334

PETER WHEELER
STATE DIRECTOR

VETERANS SERVICE BOARD
[illegible]
[illegible]
NORMAN W. MILLER II, SECRETARY, ATLANTA
TOMMY CLACK, DECATUR
[illegible]
HUGH HOWELL, JR., ATLANTA
[illegible]

June 28, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

I have been asked to respond to you with the questions asked in your meeting with Mr. Wally Barrett, SAA, Florida. I must state these are my opinions as gleaned from contracts with the various schools throughout the State of Georgia.

First: Standards of Progress. On August 14, 1975, DVB Circular 20-75-84 directed the State Approval Agencies to have schools set Standards of Progress. This outlined requirements within the parameters of VA Regulations. At the approximate time that this had been put into effect, PL 94-502 was published on October 21, 1976. DVB 20-76-84, and subsequent appendices were issued. On October 1, 1977 PL 95-202 with DVB 20-77-99 was issued. The confusion caused by these rapid issuance of changes, rules, guidelines has caused great concern to all who deal in Veterans schools affairs. The cross referencing from one set of DVB's to another is not understood and in several cases the schools have reported they find the cost of maintaining the requirements as being too expensive to operate, and we have had to withdraw approvals because of these factors. The only solution would be to issue new directives, that are complete, and understandable.

Second: Seat time as read from VAR, and as stated by VACO, differ and leaves broad interpretations that each Liaison Officer in Liaison Division differ on. Examples: VAR 14272 (d) "irregular terms"; PL550 "must have 14 class sessions"; "school states standard school sessions"; and "VA has not said what a standard class session is. 50 minutes (contact) is not a guideline, but is typical." This lack of positive statements do much to create problems for the schools in their attempts to satisfy VA requirements.

Dr. William G. Shannon
June 28, 1978
Page 2

Georgia - 2

Third: VA record keeping. This has been a time consuming and expensive matter for all schools. With the implementation of the schools' Standards of Progress, and due to their resulting checks, much of the abuses has been eliminated. Our records indicate inspections are, and have shown continued improvement during the past year.

Fourth: Safeguards for curbing abuses have been implemented, and are effective. One of the big problems in the early implementation of Standards of Progress was in the field of "Remedial studies" and by limiting the length of time each student could participate, and the requirement of testing, counseling and recommendation by a faculty member prior to admission to remedial programs, has placed this program into a controllable position.

Fifth: Catalogs and Bulletins. This Agency has a continuous monitoring of catalogs. Most schools are most cooperative in following suggestions and recommendations in this area. Our primary problem in this area is with the small proprietary schools.

Sixth: Recommended changes for VA Regulations, or in the Law regarding satisfactory progress. The Public Law, VA Regulations are clear, but the problem lies in the DVB Circulars such as DVB 20-76-84, Appendix "0" with its many revisions, changes, and the way it was written with the reference to other VAR, other circulars, and the resultant confusion the reader has in attempting to understand the requirements.

It is my understanding that you are faced with an early deadline for this material. I regret being unable to have time to make a comprehensive detailed report to you for these very critical areas that we work with on a daily basis. Please be assured of our interest in the work you are doing and that we will at any time, assist you to the best of our ability.

Very truly yours,

Arthur Orvold

Arthur T. Orvold
State Supervisor
Education & Training

ATO:ks

CC: Mr. Gordon Guthrie
State Approving Agency for
Veterans Training
1720 South Gadsden, Room E
Tallahassee, Florida 32304

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA
244 WASHINGTON STREET, S. W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334

May 5, 1978

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chancellor George L. Simpson, Jr.

FROM: Thomas McDonald

SUBJECT: Veteran Affairs Status Report

The Winter Term, 1978 reconciliation of Veteran certification reflects continued progress toward the reduction of abuse and other veteran related problems.

During the Winter Term, 1978 we had only 155 exceptions reported from an enrollment of 12,350 recipients of VA benefits. An exception is a report of status change effecting the recipient's pay that was not reported within the prescribed 30 day period of the effective date of change.

	Enrollment	Exception	Percent
Universities	3,958	45	.36
Senior	4,504	35	.28
Junior	3,888	75	.61
University System	12,350	155	1.25

The cause of exceptions fall into three categories:

1. Faculty members failing to report or late reporting a termination of attendance by the veteran. This accounts for more than 63 percent of the exceptions reported.
2. Registrar's office not processing the drop/add slips to Veteran Office. This accounts for approximately 28 percent of the exceptions.
3. Administrative errors on the part of the Registrar and/or Veteran's office. This accounts for approximately 9 percent of the exceptions.

We will continue our efforts toward eliminating all exceptions.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

lvk

cc: Vice Chancellor John W. Hooper
Dr. Haskin R. Pounds
Mr. Gordon M. Funk

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA
244 WASHINGTON STREET, S. W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334

June 1, 1978

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Sub-Committee on Veteran Affairs
Administrative Committee on Records and Admissions

FROM: Thomas McDonald
Director of Admissions and Testing

SUBJECT: Veterans Report - Spring Term 1978

PLEASE USE THE FOLLOWING FORMAT FOR THE SPRING TERM VETERANS REPORT:

A. A certification statement to the effect that a reconciliation has been made of all veterans certified for attendance and that those certified were in attendance and took the number of hours for which they were certified.

B. Total number certified for Spring Term 1978 ____________.

C. Number found to be in agreement with certification at the end of term ______________.

D. Number of exceptions to certification ___________________.
   1. Attach a list of exceptions to include:
      a. Name
      b. Hours certified
      c. Status change and effective date
      d. Action taken and date
      e. Comment (reason or explanation)

The reports should be submitted through the President of your institution to:

Thomas F. McDonald
Director of Admissions and Testing
University System of Georgia
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30337

DUE DATE IS June 30, 1978

TFM:lvk

cc: Chancellor George L. Simpson, Jr.
Vice Chancellor John W. Hooper
Presidents, as information

PRESENT POLICY

The present Board Policy states that all institutions in the University System shall be on the quarter system, and that each quarter shall consist of not less than eleven (11) weeks. (Minutes, 1932-33, p. 58)

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

There was a time when the accrediting associations provided guidelines with respect to the definitions of the quarter and quarter credit hour. Both were tied in some way to what was then known as "sitting-time". Presently, none of the regional associations, including the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, offer a definition of the terms "quarter" and "quarter credit hour". However, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officials has found general agreement among most colleges and universities with respect to the following operational definitions:

The Quarter Calendar

The quarter calendar is composed of four terms usually with eleven (11) weeks per term of instruction, and may include registration and final examinations. The Summer term is sometimes subdivided and/or shortened. However, the instruction periods are lengthened in order to make instruction time equivalent to the Fall, Winter, and Spring terms.

Georgia

Quarter Credit Hour

The unit by which an institution may measure its course work. The number of credit hours assigned to a course is usually defined by the number of hours per week in class and the number of weeks in the session. One credit hour is usually assigned to a class that meets fifty (50) minutes a week over a period of a quarter. In laboratory, field work, drawing, music, practical arts, physical education or similar type of instruction, one (1) credit hour is assigned for a session that meets two or three hours a week for a quarter.

Week

A calendar week consists of seven (7) days. (Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday).

Georgia

REPORT OF THE UNIFORM CALENDAR COMMITTEE

The Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. The three regular quarters are to be not less than eleven calendar weeks each, including registration, instruction, examinations, and reporting of grades to the registrars. This will normally include ten full weeks of instruction.

2. The scheduling of summer quarter work, may be flexible but with the stipulation that all summer quarter work be equivalent to that done in other quarters, with respect to instructional time.

3. That the following earliest beginning and latest ending dates be observed by all institutions in the System:

QUARTER	EARLIEST BEGINNING DATE ALLOWABLE	LATEST ENDING DATE ALLOWABLE
Fall 1973	September 10, 1973	December 18, 1973
Winter 1974	January 2, 1974	March 21, 1974
Spring 1974	March 25, 1974	June 8, 1974
Summer 1974	June 12, 1974	August 30, 1974
Fall 1974	September 9, 1974	December 18, 1974
Winter 1975	January 2, 1975	March 21, 1975
Spring 1975	March 24, 1975	June 9, 1975
Summer 1975	June 11, 1975	August 29, 1975
Fall 1975	September 8, 1975	December 18, 1975
Winter 1976	January 2, 1976	March 20, 1976
Spring 1976	March 24, 1976	June 9, 1976
Summer 1976	June 11, 1976	August 28, 1976

Report of Uniform Calendar Committee Georgia
Page 2

QUARTER	EARLIEST BEGINNING DATE ALLOWABLE	LATEST ENDING DATE ALLOWABLE
Fall 1976	September 13, 1976	December 18, 1976
Winter 1977	January 3, 1977	March 21, 1977
Spring 1977	March 23, 1977	June 8, 1977
Summer 1977	June 10, 1977	August 27, 1977
Fall 1977	September 12, 1977	December 18, 1977
Winter 1978	January 3, 1978	March 21, 1978
Spring 1978	March 23, 1978	June 8, 1978
Summer 1978	June 12, 1978	August 30, 1978

Approved by the Advisory Council
January 12, 1973

TFM

STATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

Office of the State Approving
Agency for Veteran Training

July 6, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

At the request of Mr. Dean E. Aschim, President of the National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA), here are some general observations as seen from Hawaii on standards of progress and abuses of VA educational benefits.

1a. Measurement of Standards of Progress

Majority of the Hawaii schools use a quantitative unit of measurement for minimum standards, either a four-point scale based on letter grades or a scale based upon percentages which serves the same measurement function. These scales are then linked to a cumulative average or norm which sets an achievement level or time standard of progress which effectively governs a student's enrollment privileges.

b. Views of Appendix O

Of the few administrators who have indicated that they fully understand what it means, majority of them see Appendix O as an arbitrary standard being dictated by VA which has no relevance to standards of progress *per se*. In other words, the administrators

Bachman Hall · University of Hawaii · 2444 Dole Street · Honolulu, Hawaii 96822 · Cable Address UNIHAW

felt that VA is infringing on the institutions' academic freedom. Others have also voiced their concern that Appendix O does not account for student growth.

2a. Full-time Equivalency

Accredited IHL's use a 12+ credit hour measurement for undergraduates; generally 8 to 12 credit hours (dependent upon nature and level of courses) for graduate students.

Accredited NCD schools use clock hours, full-time rate determined by nature of training: Academic/theory at 18+ clock hours per week; shop predominating, 22+ clock hours per week. Non-accredited: 25 hours, theory predominating, 30 hours shop predominant.

Most of the accredited NCD schools have minimum standards that exceed minimum VA requirements.

b. Basis for Assigning Credits

Accredited IHL's use the standards of measurement established by either the regional accrediting agency, their professional accreditation agents or both. Western Association IHL's in Hawaii use 15 contact hours per semester credit hour as the unit of measurement (special assessment for highly structured periods of supervision, e.g., labs, notwithstanding).

All NCD schools, accredited and non-accredited, use clock hours as the standard unit of credit.

However, the AICS accredited schools also use a "unit of credit" based upon 20 clock hours of work over a given length of time: Quarter Hour is the 20 clock hours earned in a 12-week "Quarter," a "Term Hour" is the 20 clock hours earned in an 8-week term. For evaluation purposes, these AICS schools use, as a matter of record, both methods of granting credits to students.

3a. Problems with VA Records Keeping Requirements

A major problem is in the liberal interpretation by VA on what the records should include and how maintained. To illustrate, the VA at times would reference their manual, M22-2 or program guides to cite violations. In many of these instances, the institutions are not aware of the unique VA stipulation since they are only provided with VARs.

A problem for NCD schools, accredited or non-accredited, is keeping track of the amount of time a student spends in training. The use of time clocks, attendance rosters, sign in-out sheets and all manner of methods are used to try to keep the VA properly informed of a students' attendance. However rigorously a school might keep these records, it appears not to have been adequate vis-a-vis VA compliance surveys.

Allowing/requiring schools to submit "continuous enrollment" certifications creates problems with duplication of effort: A certification submitted in the fall for the fall term stands a fairly good chance of needing amendment before the term ends; each subsequent enrollment increases the margin of error or need of change. The process of certification, verification and reverification requires almost one-half again as much work that a simple certification would accomplish for each enrollment.

Vocational/Technical schools feel that DVB Circular 20-77-31 works an undue burden in that records must be kept "active" for an unconscionably time after the student has completed his program. It appears, that any obvious rationale for providing those statistics is obviated by the availability, for the most part, of that information through other federal or state sources; e.g., Department of Labor, or state employment services.

b. Use of a Computer

Those few schools that have computerized data available, use them ancillary to a manual system due primarily to the VA records comprising little of the school's actual records management system.

For the most part, VA students comprise so few of the school's student body or the entire enrollment is so small that a manual system for VA students is adequate. Uses of computerized materials are by academic and veterans counselors to guide student's enrollments to avoid conflict, as much as possible, with Appendix M (12/10/76) of DVB Circular 20-76-84.

4a. Abuses of VA Educational Entitlements

The abuses typically identified by schools are those of a long standing nature -- dropping out without officially withdrawing from school or changing course load without notifying the school officially. The extent of abuses is proportional to the number of VA recipients as VA users are to the enrollment of respective schools, averaging 10%.

b. Safeguards to Stop Abuses

For the most part, schools have been receptive to "tightening up" their administrative procedures in monitoring VA eligibles, however, this willingness is correlative to the proportion of total enrollments that VA students represent.

5. Amending the Law or Regulations to Benefit Students

Length of training based upon number of credit hours (IHL's) should not be a part of the standards of progress. If VA wishes to impose restrictions on the length of time by credit hour accumulation that a student may be certified for (Appendices M and Revised O, DVB Circular 20-76-84) then the onus of monitoring such limit should be either VA or student responsibility.

The requirement not to certify students beyond a 12 to 14 credit hour accumulation of punitive grades works against a student in that receipt of a punitive grade each semester for four semesters (typically) denies a student VA assistance beyond his sophomore year even though he could easily be in good standing with the IHL based on GPA as a measure of satisfactory progress, which in turn meets fully the requirements of VAR 14253 and 14254, Appendix G of DVB Circular 20-77-97, and otherwise the other provisions of Appendices M and O (Revised) of 20-76-84.

Sincerely,

Fred Yamamoto

Fred T. Yamamoto
Coordinator of Veterans
Education and Training

FTY:ss

cc Mr. Dean E. Aschim, President
NASAA
Mr. Merlin D. Anderson
Regional Vice President, NASAA

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT of VETERANS' AFFAIRS
P.O. BOX 5054
126 WEST JEFFERSON STREET
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62705
(217) 782-7837

JAMES R. WASHBURN
DIRECTOR

WALTER J. KESSELMAN
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

STATE OF ILLINOIS
STATE APPROVING AGENCY
RESPONSES: STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

I. HOW DO INSTITUTIONS MEASURE STUDENT PROGRESS?

Answer: By completion of a number of credit hours toward a degree goal. Such completion is measured by letter grade equivalents of A-B-C-D-F. (i.e. if 120 credit hours is necessary to complete degree, "satisfactory progress" is passing of sufficient courses to graduate in four years of study.)

II. WHAT ARE VIEWS OF APPENDIX O REVISED?

Answer: Almost entirely negative. Only two IHL have requested waiver out of over 300 schools. Many apparently view it as a covert attempt to "blackmail" the schools.

III. HOW DO IHL'S MEASURE FULL-TIME STUDENTS?

Answer: By the number of credit hours per quarter or semester a student is enrolled for (i.e. 12 or over full time, 9-11 hours 3/4 time, 6 hours 1/2 time.)

IV. WHAT BASIS DOES INSTITUTION ASSIGN CREDIT RELATIVE TO CLASSTIME?

Answer: Usually, one credit hour for one hour of class time for duration of quarter or semester.

V. (A) PROBLEMS, IF ANY, DO THE THE INSTITUTIONS HAVE IN REGARD TO RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS? (B) IF COMPUTERIZED, WHAT ARE THEY USING WHICH MIGHT HELP OTHERS?

Answer: (A) Generally speaking, the requirements on attendance, independent study, incomplete (I) grades, non-punitive grades and related factors.
(B) Unable to ascertain on short notice.

Illinois

VI. SAFEGUARDS IN REGARD TO VETERANS' REQUIREMENTS?

Answer: Faculty list of irregular class attendance. Computer generated update (weekly) for all veterans.

VII. DO INSTITUTIONS FEEL THAT THERE ARE ABUSES OF REQUIREMENTS?

Answer: Generally speaking, their respect for the integrity of veterans exceeds that of the Veterans' Administration. (No)

VIII. WHAT ARE INSTITUTIONS DOING TO CURB THESE ABUSES?

Answer: See Item VI and VII.

RECOMMENDATION TO CHANGE VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION REQUIREMENTS IN REGARD TO STANDARDS OF PROGRESS? WHAT AMENDMENTS WOULD THEY RECOMMEND TO MAKE REQUIREMENTS MORE EQUITABLE?

Answer: One comment from the largest University might be apropos:

"In many, perhaps most, and maybe in all cases these grades *reflect* considered faculty and student judgment on progress toward a degree. It is our interest and the Veterans' Administration's to move students along as rapidly as possible *toward* their degree. We solicit and welcome your support in doing so. *Such educational decisions best remain with the colleges and the faculty of these colleges.*" These last underlinings are my own, but generally speaking, reflects, I believe, the honest opinion of anyone sincerely dedicated to Higher Education. The intrusion of the Veterans' Administration has been at least unwelcome to accredited schools of Illinois. I believe Illinois IHLs would welcome any amendment which would restore their integrity as educators. Finally, the Veterans' Administration should be responsible for payment of educational allowances to veterans who have a right and responsibility in regard to receipt of such benefits.

[illegible]

July 5, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit AVenue
Kensington, MD 20759

Dear Dr. Shannon:

Last week, I received from our NASSA regional Vice President a list of questions which you have compiled to assist you in preparing a study on the success of the Veterans Administration's enforcement of Standards of Progress requirements as outlined by Congress in Public Las 94-502. Due to the short time interval between my receipt of the questions and your deadline for submitting the draft report to the Veterans Administration, I was unable to query individual schools or other agencies for their opinions. therefore, this response is representative of the opinions of this Agency's officers and may not necessarily reflect the attitudes of school officials or other agency officials in the State of Indiana.

1. How do Institutions measure students' progress?

Most Institutions of Higher Learning in the State require students to maintain a minimum grade point average to remain in academic good standing. Grade Points are totaled accumulatively and divided by the number of semester or quarter hours which the student has attempted. Generally the accumulative Grade Point Average which the student must maintain is measured on an ascending scale. Thus, the longer a student has been attending school, the higher the Grade Point Average he must maintain. Most Institutions require a final Accumulative Grade Point Average of 2.00 on a 4.00 scale. This system is fairly standard and has been in use for generations.

2. What are the Institutions and SAAs' views on Appendis O Revised?

DVB Circular 20-76-84, Appendix O (December 17, 1976) attemoted to provide instructions to Institutions, State Approving Agencies, and Veterans Administration Officials to enforce the provisions of Public Law 94-502 relating to unsatisfactory progress by individual veterans. The Circular was hastily written and contained a number of indecipherable examples which probably created more confusion than they were worth. the revised Appendix O, (February 3, 1978) is a step in the right direction. For one thing, it is two pages shorter. The new appendix allows Institutions with well-established Standards of Progress to be exempted from the specific procedures outlined by the Veterans Administration. This merely reflects the actual practice of institutions which faced a conflict between the original appendix and long established institutional policies. In the past

July 5, 1978
Dr. William Shannon
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when such conflicts existed, Institutions applied their own policies to veteran students. The really objectionable part of Appendix O Revised is Section 5, "Implementation of Exemptions." In essence, the State Approving Agency has been reduced to an advisory body to the VA Regional Office. Approval authority of an Institution's academic policies has been transferred to the Director of the VA Regional Office. This action is objectionable for two reasons. The Congress expressed no such intent when it enacted Public Law 94-502. VA Regional Directors are responsible for managing a large and varied benefits program in which GI Bill educational programs are but a part. Regional Office Directors should not be expected to have the expertise or the time to devote to such problems.

3. How do Institutions measure full-time students?

Mostinstitutions are uniform in measuring full-time requirements as twelve credit hours for financial aid recipients. This standard applies to students in receipt of many types of financial aid as well as veterans. Schools which do not measure on a quarter hour basis will frequently tailor their full time requirements to match the requirements for full-time benefits of federal financial aid programs.

4. What basis does the Institution assign credit relative to class time?

The uniform standard used by most institutions is one credit per hour of classroom attendance required per week. More hours of attendance are required per credit when the instruction is offered as lab, shop, or clinical experience. There are a few very troublesome non-traditional programs of education which are hard to pin down in terms of the amount of time a student devotes.

5. What problems if any do Institutions have regarding record keeping requirements?

One must take care to separate the universal grumbling about governmental paperwork requirements and the very real problems which an institution faces in conducting its business. Ideally, the Institution's policies relative to standards of progress, attendance and conduct: and the institutional system of enforcing these standards would be sufficient to meet most VA requirements. On paper many of them are. However, institutional policies and their effectiveness toward VA or other financial aid beneficiaries are wholly dependent upon the people responsible for implementing those policies. A school with capable, adequately staffed financial aid officers generally has very little trouble with the Veterans Administration. Conversely, if a school does not allocate sufficient personnel and resources to administer its financial aid programs properly, all the regulations and all the VA and SAA supervisors in the world will not prevent abuses.

6. If Institutions have a computer system, what are they using which could help other schools?

Computers are very handy tools. In large institutions with significant veteran enrollments thay can save time and effort. However, the old GIGO master program is still in effect. If the institution does not have a capable and knowledgeable

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financial aids officer with the necessary authority to carry out institutional policy; the use of an expensive computer system will be like putting earrings on a hog.

7. What are the Institutions' safeguards regarding abuses to veteran requirements?

Institutions must be able to keep tabs on their veteran students. The veteran certifying official must not only certify the student at the beginning of the semester or school year, but also be able to follow his progress during the course of the year. The best safeguard for an institution is as stated above. The institution must have a capable financial aids officer with the authority to carry out the school's responsibilities in the financial aid program.

8. Do the Institutions feel there are abuses to these requirements?

I've never yet met a responsible school official who was not aware that some students may be "working the system." No eligible veteran should be denied the opportunity to use his GI benefits to pursue an education. Not all eligible veterans will use the benefits honestly. This is a simple fact, and should not detract from the overall success of the GI Bill.

9. What are the Institutions doing to curb these abuses?

The institutions are now aware of the problem, and in fairness the incidence of abuse has been reduced. The most important action by any Institution has been to review the performance of its existing policies in regard to student academic performance. In many cases, Institutions have discovered that although their existing standards were adequate on paper, enforcement of those policies proved to be lax and occasionally non-existant. Criticism by State Approving Agencies and the federal government has been a spur for Institutional administrators to regain control of academic policy. The most important element in preventing abuse of the GI Bill is an awareness on the part of the Institution that abuses can occur and that Institutional standards must be monitored to insure that the standards are working as designed.

10. Do the Institutions have any recommendations to change VA regulations?

Lots. Unfortunately many are unprintable. The most serious recommendation is to permit Institutional policies to be operated without being superseded by conflicting or inappropriate VA regulations. The new Appendix D, Revised recognizes this to a certain extent and permits an institution to operate within its own academic guidelines provided those guidelines meet minimum federal standards.

11. What amendments would they recommend to make the requirements more equitable?

I cannot speak for the Institutions. / My most serious concern is that there seems to be a gradual federalization of the supervision of schools approved for the GI Bill. It is the responsibility of the Veterans Administration to assure that GI

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Dr. William Shannon
Page 4

benefits are being spent in accordance with the purpose of the program. It is most definitely NOT within the purview of the Veterans Administration to dictate academic policy. The distinction between state and federal authority seems to be blurring in some peoples' minds. This is an undesirable development which should not be permitted to continue.

As you will probably conclude from the above, I am a diehard states' righter. Although I can only speak for Indiana, I feel that the State Approving Agencies in this state have capably fulfilled their contractual obligations to the Veterans Administration. I also feel that our local Veterans Administration officials have scrupulously observed the authority of the state agencies. The separate responsibilities of State Approving Agencies and the Veterans Administration frequently create friction between the two. Overall, I believe the performance has been in accordance with the intent of the Congress and the best interests of our veteran population.

Sincerely,

William J Ewbank

William J. Ewbank
Director - Private School Unit

WJE:djf

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
Department of Education
BUREAU OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
FRANKFORT 40601

June 28, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

It is our understanding that you are requesting certain information relative to your study on seat time and satisfactory progress regulations for the Veterans Administration as outlined below:

A. Standards of Progress

Q1. How do your institutions generally measure progress?

A1. Practically all institutions of higher learning use a letter grading system which assigns an "E" or an "F" for a failing grade which carries no credit points. Most schools compute a grade point average and require a certain minimum for satisfactory progress and graduation.

We feel that reference to a limit of one probationary term in VA Regulation 14254 needs to be clarified. We do not feel that under the provisions of Appendix O probationary terms need to be necessarily limited.

Q2. What are your schools' and State Approving Agency's opinion of Appendix O?

A2. We as the State Approving Agency basically agree with this concept. We do recognize that many schools with large veteran enrollments may have difficulty in implementing this circular.

The basic concept of Appendix O is valid; however, the format is confusing in the way the many different categories of standards of progress, non-punitive grades, exemptions, mitigating circumstances, etc. are presented. The majority of the schools do not understand Appendix O thoroughly enough to express a valid opinion.

B. Seat Time

Q1. How do your institutions generally measure full-time?

A1. Virtually all schools consider 12 credit hours as being full-time.

Kentucky-2

Q2. On what basis can your institutions assign credit relative to class time?

A2. Our institutions generally adhere to the 50 minute-per-week throughout the term as being one hour of credit for academic subjects. Laboratory type classes generally measure two hours per week as being one hour credit. Measurement of laboratory time varies.

C. General

Q1. What problems do your institutions have with VA recordkeeping requirements?

A1. Reporting promptly when veteran students' progress and attendance become unsatisfactory. Many schools are unable to properly monitor courses to insure that all will count toward degree requirements. In the State of Kentucky, our schools have been informed by the Veterans Administration that they must report any change in credit hour load even though it would not reduce the student to less than full-time status.

Also, the schools are required to report to the Veterans Administration at the time a student is placed on probation. (We are not aware of any VA regulations, directives, or circulars that require this type of report.) Even though the Veterans Administration makes it clear that accredited institutions of higher learning are not required to maintain attendance records, nonetheless, the reports required from the schools by the VA are dependent upon a system of recording attendance, particularly to report a veteran's last day of attendance.

Q2. Do any of them have a computerized system? If so, what is it?

A2. Yes. Many of our larger institutions do have a computerized system of recordkeeping. These systems reveal the following:

1. Class schedules
2. Grade point averages
3. Hours attempted
4. Hours earned
5. Cumulative hours attempted
6. Cumulative hours earned
7. Cumulative grade point averages
8. Semester averages
9. Name and grade of subjects taken

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Q3. Do your institutions have safeguards for curbing veteran abuses?

A3. We feel like the majority of our institutions do have a system of safeguards for curtailing veteran abuses.

Q4. What are their feelings about veteran abuses?

A4. Most schools are sincerely concerned and willing to cooperate to the greatest extent to reduce abuses to a minimum. However, many of our schools are very much concerned about the many requirements and maintenance of special records for the small veteran student population compared to the larger non-veteran student population.

Q5. Do you have any recommended changes in the VA regulations or laws concerning the veterans program?

A5. We recommend that the VA regulations be updated. Regulations have not been updated to implement Public Law 94502 and Public Law 95202. The Veterans Administration should stop administering laws by circulars. The program should be administered by regulations which have been published in accordance with the federal procedures. Consideration should be given to extending the 10 year delimiting date.

I am enclosing a copy of a position paper adopted by the Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers last fall. Some of the issues contained in this position statement are relevant to your study.

We appreciate the opportunity to have input into this study. If there are additional information or questions, please let me know.

Very truly yours,

James R. McGown, Director
Division of Interagency Relations

JRM/le

Enclosure

cc: Gordon Guthrie/Enclosure

From Kentucky SAA

KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION of COLLEGIATE REGISTRARS and ADMISSIONS OFFICERS

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November 10, 1977

Mr. James R. McCown
Director of Interagency Relations
Kentucky Approving Agency for
Veterans Education
2036 Capital Plaza Tower
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Mr. McCown:

The fifty-three institutions of higher education making-up the Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers have adopted the enclosed position statement, relative to the current G. I. Bill, the Veterans Administration, and the role of member institutions in their dealings with both. Daniel C. Seaver, University of Kentucky, presented the statement to the KACRAO membership on October 13, 1977. The statement, "Issues Relative to Public Law 94-502, DVB Circular 20-76-84, And The Veterans Administration", was adopted unanimously.

The membership requested that the statement be "widely disseminated" to those individuals concerned with veterans education. You are one of the key people concerned with Veterans issues. As someone directly interested in Veterans issues, you are receiving a copy of KACRAO's position statement.

KACRAO's membership appreciates the attention and cooperation you have demonstrated. You are respectfully asked to carefully read the enclosed document. Should you wish further information, do not hesitate to contact us.

Cordially,

R. D. Baker
President

RDB/pmw

FIFTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING
OCT. 11-13, 1978, LAKE BARKLEY

Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

A Position Statement:

The Issues Relative To

Public Law 94-502,

DVB Circular 20-76-84,

And The

Veterans Administration

General Statement

The Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (KACRAO) fully supports the efforts of its parent organization, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and the entire educational community in the promotion of positive changes and modifications in Public Law 94-502, "Veterans' Education and Employment Assistance Act of 1976," and in the provisions of DVB Circular 20-76-84 (appendices and revisions) issued by the Veterans Administration to implement the law.

KACRAO further endorses a position which fully recognizes the worth and value of all students, including veterans and other eligible persons, in their pursuit of an education; which respects the integrity of educational institutions to set their own reasonable standards of progress; which calls for any agency of government to avoid efforts to "exercise any supervision or control ...over...any educational institution (Title 38, Ch. 36, Section 1782);" and which strives to foster a spirit of cooperation in relationships with the Veterans Administration, the Kentucky State Approving Agency, and other agencies and organizations who are engaged either directly or indirectly in providing services to student veterans and other eligible recipients of veterans educational benefits.

Background Statement

The current G.I. Bill, hereafter referred to as PL 94-502, was signed into law by former President Gerald Ford on October 15, 1976. The enactment of this law ushered in many sweeping changes to the area of veterans educational benefits which have had a definite impact over the past twelve months on student veterans and other eligible persons, the entire educational community, and the Veterans Administration. By and large the new G.I. Bill has been viewed in a positive way by veterans groups and other segments of the general population. This has been due primarily to the increases in the educational benefit rate, in the basic entitlement for both Chapter 34 and 35 persons, in the tutorial assistance program, and in the V.A. educational loan program. However, the bill also included many provisions which have been viewed with mixed feelings by many student veterans, and particularly by the educational community as a whole.These provisions have come under fire not so much because of their intent, but rather due to the limitations and restrictions which have been imposed on recipients of veterans benefits and on the institutions they have attended.

Throughout the hearings that ultimately led to PL 94-502, much attention was focused on the need to curb the costly abuses by a small minority of veterans and also by the less-than-reputable institutions which have preyed on the veteran population since the days of the post-World War II G.I. Bill. One Government Accounting Office (GAO) report which was referred to during the hearings indicated that almost $1.4 billion have been paid in overpayment cases during the past decade. The GAO further reported that the amount outstanding in overpayments for Fiscal Year 1976 was approximately $823 million (Student Aid News, January 18,1977; Chronicle of Higher Education, April 11, 1977). This report, nor other federal reports, does much to emphasize that a sizable portion of the outstanding overpayments has been recovered, or waived. Nonetheless, the Congress reacted during the closing days of the 94th Congress perhaps too rashly and too quickly by "putting some teeth" into the new G.I. Bill in the hope that the new statute would remedy, or reduce the costly problem. The end result was a new law on veterans educational benefits which brought about several positive changes, but which contained some rather problematic provisions which were not fully understood by the institutions of higher learning, by the Veterans Administration which was called on to implement the law, and perhaps not even by some of those legislators who voted the statute into existence.

DVB Circular 20-76-84 was issued by the Veterans Administration shortly after the enactment of the law and detailed the way in which the new statute was to be implemented. During the past year this document has been clarified, updated, and revised several times to aid both the V.A.'s Regional Officesand the institutions in complying with the statute. The cooperative spirit which the Veterans Administration has shown throughout the past year has only been dampened by the fact that many of the changes which the educational community has recommended can only be brought about through modifications of Public Law 94-502. Regardless of this fact, there are several of the DVB Circular 20-76-84 provisions which have drawn the concern of KACRAO, AACRAO, and other educational organizations, and institutions. For purposes of this position statement, the major issues are defined below:

> The 85-15 Rule—Limits the proportion of students who may receive veterans benefits, federal grants, and institutional aid to no more than 85 per cent of the enrollment in each major field of study in an educational institution. The rule is waived for institutions certifying that no more than 35 per cent of their total enrollment is made up of veterans receiving G.I. Bill benefits.
>
> The Two-Year Rule—Bars G.I. Bill payments to veterans for any course taken at a branch campus of a public, or other tax-supported institution that is located outside the taxing jurisdiction of the main campus until the course has been in existence for two years. The rule also prohibits payments to students enrolling in courses at branches beyond the normal commuting distance of proprietary institutions until the courses have been offered for two years.

Appendix M (DVB Circular 20-76-84)—Bans G.I. Bill payments to veterans for courses they audit or for courses that do not count toward meeting graduation requirements. It also terminates payments if veterans withdraw from classes.

Appendix O (DVB Circular 20-76-84)—Requires that students receiving G.I. Bill payments progress through school at a satisfactory rate. The acceptable timetable for graduation is defined by the Veterans Administration.

School Liability for Overpayments--Makes institutions enrolling veterans responsible for collecting and repaying overpayments of G.I. Bill benefits.

(taken from "A G.I. Bill Glossary," The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 25, 1977)

List of Principles and Recommendations

The Kentucky Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (KACRAO) submits the following list of principles and recommendations in support of its position regarding Public Law 94-502 and DVB Circular 20-76-84 (appendices and revisions):

1). KACRAO supports DVB Circular 20-76-84 Change 6 (appendix H) of June 10, 1977, "Extended 85-15 Per Cent Requirements," extending the temporary waiver of counting BEOG and SEOG students in the 85% (supported) portion of the 85-15% ratio to June 30, 1978. The organization recommends that a permanent waiver be granted to exclude BEOG and SEOG students from any future 85-15 computation.

The observation is offered that the 85-15 per cent requirements (appendix H) may conflict to some extent with the requirements of the Veterans Cost-of-Instruction Program (VCIP) administered by the Office of Education, DHEW. VCIP required services (45 CFR Part 189 Subpart B 189.11c) include recruitment, or attempting to interest eligible persons into taking advantage of educational and training opportunities at the institution. As the current law reads with regard to appendix H, one might surmise that veterans and other eligible persons should not be encouraged to enter a particular major field of study if the individual might tip the 85-15 per cent ratio balance.

2). KACRAO supports the elimination of the Two-Year Rule (appendix C) which severely restricts the continued growth of branches and extensions of public or private institutions. The organization recommends that overall responsibility for monitoring course or program offerings at branches or extensions be returned to the State Approving Agency which should exercise its authority to approve or disapprove new programs. Conceivably the State Approving Agency should be able to "weed out" those programs which are primarily aimed at recipients of veterans benefits and other federal monies.

3). KACRAO supports the intent of Appendix M, "Prohibition of Educational Assistance Payments for Courses Not Counted To Satisfy Graduation Requirements," to curb abuses particularly by the very small minority of persons who have in the past, for example, withdrawn from all courses just prior to the end of the semester or quarter and received non-punitive grades (i.e. W, WP) which would allow them to return the next term to repeat this same fraudulent act of receiving benefits they were not fully entitled to receive. However, a number of veterans doing marginal academic work at institutions which permit students to withdraw passing ("WP", beyond the 30 day period for unrestricted dropping and adding of courses as recognized by the V.A. have begun asking their instructors for failing grades rather than remaining with the non-punitive grades which were orginally received in individual courses. The regulation has thus had the effect of encouraging veterans and other eligible persons to settle for failing grades in courses which may be repeated in the future in order to avoid overpayment problems.

KACRAO feels that Appendix M is in direct violation with the provisions of Title 38, Chapter 36, Section 1782 (3b, 3c, and 3d) which state that......

> "No department, agency, or office of the United States, in carrying out this chapter, shall exercise any supervision or control, whatsoever, over any State approving agency or State educational agency, or any educational institution...."

Moreover, the recommendation is made that the provisions contained in Appendix M be eliminated through an ammendment to the law thus permitting institutions to establish their own standards.

4). KACRAO does not see the need for Appendix O, "Unsatisfactory Progress," inasmuch as Chapter 35, Section 1724, and Chapter 34, Section 1674, indicate that prescribed practices and standards of educational institutions should be recognized and respected. Each institution in accordance with its own academic policies and rules should be permitted to determine if each recipient of veterans educational benefits is progressing academically at a satisfactory rate.

5). While KACRAO certainly recognizes the need for the federal government to intervene in a responsible way to reduce the overpayment problem as much as possible, the member institutions stand firm on the issue of institutional liability for overpayments made to veterans and other eligible persons. Under no circumstances should an institution be held liable in the case of an overpayment unless willful intent is established. The 30 day reporting period which the Veterans Administration gives institutions to report a change in the veteran's status (i.e. withdrawal from school, change in course hours, etc.) is regarded as unrealistic unless the individual veteran reports the change to the institution's certifying official during the period. The organization feels that the school liability issue as discussed in numerous V.A. regulations does not place the responsibility for overpayments with the proper person. Instead, over the past two years more and more emphasis has been placed on the institutions by the V.A. to monitor the activities of student veterans on campus often above and beyond the requirements stipulated for receipt of the V.A.'s annual reporting fee.

KACRAO believes that the time has come to assign responsibility for overpayments to the veteran or other eligible person who actually received the educational benefits rather than to the institution. While the Veterans Administration does not require institutions with veteran populations to take class attendance, it does insist that some mechanism be developed for reporting all changes of status in a timely way. Again it seems quite unrealistic to assume that institutions with large or even small veteran enrollments will be able to make the proper report to the Veterans Administration within the 30 day reporting period without the full cooperation of each recipient of veterans benefits.

The most typical overpayment example found on many college and university campuses is that of the veteran who chooses for various reasons not to officially withdraw from school, and simply discontinues his attendance at the institution without first reporting to the certifying official. Normally information regarding his failure to withdraw through the proper channels will only become available following the close of the semester when all veterans' grades are reviewed. Since the institution's report of a change in the veteran's status will be sent to the V.A. Regional Office beyond the 30 day period after his last day of attendance, a report to the Veterans Administration at this time will often open the door to a possible charge of liability on the part of the school unless the amount of the overpayment can be collected from the veteran, or is waived. Again one might pose the question that "if the veteran is the person receiving the educational benefits, then why should his institution be held liable to repay the amounts received particularly when the student did not report a change in status to his institution's certifying official?"

KACRAO recommends very strongly that the existing law regarding school liability for overpayments be amended along with the pertinent V.A. regulations which address this issue to permit institutions to report changes in the veteran's status 30 days after the institution discovers the change, not 30 days after the change occurs. Furthermore, the member institutions further emphasize that institutions should not be held liable for overpayments made to veterans unless the V.A. is able to establish that the institution acted in a willful manner in making the false report.

In an effort to seek solutions to the overpayment problem, KACRAO recommends that the V.A. return to its former policy of mailing periodic student certification cards (form 21-Z) to student veterans during their period of enrollment. This action would serve to place the responsibility for certifying that there were no changes in status squarely on the shoulders of the veteran. In this way also, the student veteran by signing the document would be accepting full responsibility for any fraudulent acts on his part which may have resulted in his receipt of educational benefits to which he was not entitled. It is generally felt that this recommendation would be a definite step toward finding one equitable solution to the school liability issue and the problem of overpayments.

6). KACRAO registers its concern over DVB 20-76-84, 3h, which states that the records and accounts of educational institutions pertaining to all students will be made available to representatives of the Veterans Administration and other federal agencies to insure compliance with Chapters 31, 32, 34, and 35. Although Senate Report 94-1243 issued by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs stipulates the types of information which may be reviewed by the Veterans Administration, educational institutions and organizations throughout the United States are still very much concerned over the possible legal cases which may result in the event a non-veteran student charges that the DVB Circular 20-76-84's reference to access to all student records infringes on his rights guaranteed in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERP).

KACRAO supports efforts on the part of the educational community working with the Veterans Administration and other federal agencies to modify the law and the V.A. regulations to insure greater compliance with the generally accepted intent of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERP).

7). KACRAO endorses the action on the part of the Veterans Administration to further clarify the wording of DVB Circular 20-76-84 (appendices and revisions) to better enable V.A. Regional Offices and educational institutions to more accurately interpret and carry out the existing regulations.

8) KACRAO recommends that the Veterans Administration re-examine the feasibility of phasing out the "Vet Rep On Campus (VROC)" program at educational institutions. While the VROC program (Title 38) has not been supported by everyone in the educational community, it has enjoyed a measure of success in resolving payment and overpayment problems involving student veterans.

At the present time a policy is being followed by the Veterans Administration not to replace Vet Reps in the field when they terminate their employment with the V.A., or when they are transferred elsewhere. The responsibilities left behind by the departing Vet Rep are then often divided among other Vet Reps. The end result of this action is that when the institution's Vet Rep is not available, the veteran with a payment or overpayment problem must then rely on the institution's certifying official to intervene on his behalf, or must contact the Regional Office himself to try to resolve the difficulty. It would appear that the intervention of a Vet Rep will most often result in the quicker resolution of the veteran's problem, which will in turn cause the individual to receive his next check in a more timely way.

KACRAO urges the Veterans Administration to look at alternate ways to insure the faster resolution of problems involving veterans and their receipt of veterans educational benefits particularly if the trend toward a phase-down in the "Vet Rep On Campus" program continues.

STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

J. KELLY NIX
State Superintendent

P. O. BOX 44064
BATON ROUGE, LA.
70804

June 30, 1978

Mr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kennington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

Mr. John Hutchens, Vice President of the South Central Region of the National Association of State Approving Agencies, called and asked that I submit you information relative to the study being made of the Standards of Progress utilized by the institutions of higher learning in Louisiana. Information will be given according to the outline furnished by Mr. Hutchens.

I. Standards of Progress

A. When DVB Circular 20-76-84 came out directing the SAA to assist institutions of higher learning in developing standards for monitoring progress, meetings were held with representatives of the various schools. Considerable time was devoted to working with the schools in developing an effective criteria of approval pertaining to progress that would eliminate abuses in the G.I. program. The schools were most cooperative in assisting us to develop the standards. Obviously, they are not identical, but most of them are based on a 4.0 grading system and generally require a 2.0 or C average in order to be satisfactory. A student that makes less that a 2.0 and more than a 1.0 may have one semester or quarter of probation. Any student that makes below 1.0 is reported to the VA as being unsatisfactory.

In most of the approvals, there is a provision that a student who is taking two or more subjects is considered unsatisfactory if he drops all courses after 14 days of a long session or 7 days of a summer session. A course dropped after midterm must be assigned an F for VA purposes, even though the school policy might permit the granting of a WA, WB, WC, etc.

B. When Public Law 94-502 was passed with the resulting Appendix O, our schools were greatly concerned. Their contention was that we had already adopted a policy that should prevent abuses and now we have conflicting instructions from the VA. The original Appendix O was lengthy and difficult to understand, and as a matter of fact, most of the schools chose to follow the approval criteria that had been approved by the SAA. It was their contention that we would wait until Appendix O was better understood. As you know, there were several proposed modifications of this particular circular before Appendix O Revised was issued.

When Public Law 95-202 was passed that resulted in the final revision of Appendix O and the publishing of Appendix G of DVB Circular 20-77-37, there were still uncertainties on the part of the officials of the institutions of higher learning. We then held another meeting with these officials and explained paragraph 4a of Revised Appendix O that provides for the possibility of exemption if required and Appendix G that provides for a suspension. (See attached.) At this point requests from approximately half of the IHL's have been received and all, except one, have requested the exemption under paragraph 4a. In other words, they feel that they can moniter progress under the standards previously approved easier than they can follow paragraph 6-11 of Revised O. It is our contention and that of the school officials as well as the VA that the criteria developed before either of the last laws were passed will detect unsatisfactory progress as soon or sooner than under paragraph 6-11 of Revised Appendix O.

Indications from the schools that have not submitted a request lead us to believe that most all will request the exemption. As the VA approves the exemption as recommended by the SAA, it is our plan to so advise the schools in order that they will know the rules to be followed at the beginning of the fall semester.

II. Seat Time

A. We have been aware that there is a problem in some of the states because of the small number of classroom hours or equivalent that is required in order for an undergraduate student to earn a credit hour. We do not have information from all of the colleges available, but in general, IHL's in Louisiana require 45 standard class sessions in order to earn three semester hours. We do not feel that this is a big problem in Louisiana.

B. We plan, however, to direct our attention to this in our future dealings with colleges and universities.

III. Records

A. We do not know how many of our schools have computer systems for keeping records. Most of the institutions of any size do have their records on computers, however, the smaller institutions still use the manual system of keeping records.

B. We do not have any recommendation as to a record system that we would recommend for other schools.

C. We do not know of any serious problems involved in record keeping in the colleges and universities. Some of the larger schools have stated that they do encounter difficulty in securing transcripts on a timely basis. At least one of the institutions has the registrar to evaluate the credit hours that are allowed when the transcripts are received. At a later date, when the transcript is evaluated by the Department of Education, the number of hours of credit actually allowed will be less than that originally reported by the registrar. This is a problem that we must resolve.

IV. Safeguards

A. We do not think that there were widespread abuses in the colleges and universities in Louisiana. We do know that in some of the schools there were abuses in respect to attendance. There were also abuses in that veterans would pursue courses at random that were not part of a degree program. In the past, we have discovered cases where veterans were paid education and training allowance for 3, 4, or 5 semesters and would not have more that 15 or 20 hours of credit. We also have discovered that veterans sometimes did not take the courses in the order intended. In other words, they might take a senior course in the freshman year. This generally occurred in a branch or extension of the regular university.

At one time, the schools were not reporting credit allowed for previous training and experience. In some instances, they were not timely reporting withdrawals and drops on a timely basis. Also many of them were not reporting changes of programs.

B. In Louisiana we found widespread abuses in one particular college about a year before the VA published DVB Circular 20-75-84 that required us to develop standards of progress. (See Enclosure) These standards which were essentially the same as the ones we later helped develop for all schools, were required of this particular school under the authority granted the SAA in Section 1778, Title 38 USC. Subsequent to this, in our meetings with school officials in developing the current criteria, these abuses were discussed and it was found that in some instances there were abuses in other schools. Through the cooperation of the school officials, the VA, and SAA, we definitely believe that the number of abuses have been minimized.

However, in one school the VA made a complete audit and found that they had not lived up to the approval criteria that had been developed and signed by the college chancellor. As a result of the discrepancies reported by the VA, enrollment in this particular state school was suspended until they had set up a procedure that would prevent future abuses. Attached is a copy of the letter of suspension sent to this particular school. Follow-up visits have been made and we are now satisfied that they are in compliance.

V. Recommendations

We certainly do not want any stricter laws in respect to standards of progress. We feel that there is too much detail in the law that should be covered in regulations. Actually, at this point in time, we feel that in Louisiana that no changes should be made as long as the schools are permitted the exemption provided in paragraph 4a of Revised O.

It is hoped that this information will be beneficial to you in preparation of your report. If additional information is needed, please advise.

Sincerely yours,

W. Lee Smith

W. Lee Smith, Director
Veterans Education and Training Bureau

WLS:EOF:ajc

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Dean E. Aschim

December 15, 1977

Dr. Leonard C. Barnes
Vice President in Charge
Southern University - Shreveport
3050 Cooper Road
Shreveport, Louisiana 71107

Dear Dr. Barnes:

In 1975 and 1976, personnel of the State Approving Agency met with representatives of the colleges and universities in Louisiana on several occasions. The primary purpose of these meetings was to develop approval standards for each of the schools designed to improve the effectiveness of the educational programs for veterans.

In a letter dated February 26, 1976, you were furnished a letter approving the criteria that had been developed by Southern University in Shreveport. In June, 1976, Mr. E. O. Forman, supervisor of the SAA, visited with Mr. Clifton Jones, and discussed problems involved in implementing the revised criteria. During that meeting, emphasis was placed on important and pertinent aspects of the approval. Special attention was called to the fact that in order for the Veterans Administration to continue to pay educational benefits, the veteran concerned must be successfully pursuing a program that would lead to an educational goal. In this respect, Mr. Jones was cautioned to assure that veterans would not be certified to the VA for courses that were not part of individual programs. Furthermore, he was cautioned not to certify to the VA courses for which the veteran had previously received a passing grade.

The VA has furnished me a copy of a compliance survey report that was prepared as a result of a thorough audit they made of the records pertaining to veterans as Southern University in Shreveport. This audit was made during September, 1977. This report reflects numerous violations of the criteria of approval and other regulations. Students have been permitted to repeat courses that they have successfully completed. Also, some have been permitted to take courses that are not part of their educational goal, whether it be an associate degree or a bachlor degree. Unsatisfactory progress has not been timely reported to the VA as required.

The Veterans' Education and Training Bureau is the designated agency for the approval and supervision of schools that offer training for veterans and dependents. The designation is given in accordance with Section 1771, Chapter 36, Title 38 US Code.

Dr. Leonard C. Barnes
December 15, 1977
Page 2

The authority to approve Southern University in Shreveport carries with it the authority and responsibility to disapprove or suspend the approval where it is found that there has been excessive violations. Under the circumstances, it has been determined that the best interest of all concerned will be served for the approval of Southern University in Shreveport to be suspended. During this period of suspension, representatives from the SAA as well as the VA will work with you and college officials in an effort to set up the necessary safeguards and procudures to insure future compliance with applicable laws and regulations. However, the responsibility of correcting the inequities rests with the university.

The approval of Southern University in Shreveport is suspended effective January 3, 1978. During the suspension, those veterans currently enrolled may continue to receive VA benefits if they are otherwise eligible. No additional veterans or dependents are to be certified to the VA during suspension. As indicated above. the suspension will be lifted at a time when you provide assurance that the serious discrepancies are corrected and will not recur.

Sincerely yours,

W. Lee Smith, Director
Veterans' Education and Training
in the Division of Auxiliary Programs

WLS:EOF:he

cc: Dr. Jessie N. Stone, Jr., President
Southern University, Baton Rouge

Mr. Lionel Johnson
President of the Board of Supervisors
Southern University

Mr. J. Kelly Nix
Superintendent of Education

Mr. Melvet Dangerfield
Assistant Superintendent
Auxiliary Programs

Mr. Doyle Craighead, Supervisor
Veterans' Education and Training

Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

DVB Circular 20-75-84
Change 1
(Confirming Teletype Trans.)

SCHOOL STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

DVB Circular 20-75-84 is changed as follows:

Page 2, paragraph 3

Subparagraph a: Delete this subparagraph and insert

"a. If no standards of progress have been received by the State approving agency from the school by January 31, 1976, or the date the Station Director determines to be 90 days from the time the SAA issued guidelines (but in no event beyond the current school year), the regional office having liaison responsibility will be notified."

Subparagraph b, line 3: Delete "(223)" and insert "(22[illegible]

Page 3, paragraph 4

Subparagraphs b, c and d: Delete these subparagraphs and insert

"b. If the Liaison activity establishes that a school has failed to properly notify the VA when standards of progress have not been met, the claims or DEA folder will be referred to the Adjudication Division. Benefits will be terminated effective the date of failure to meet the standards determined in subparagraph a above. The veteran or eligible person will be notified of the action by means of an FL 22-337, or a dictated letter along with the appropriate application form.

c. If counseling is requested and/or an application for additional educational assistance is received, the veteran or eligible person will be scheduled for counseling as expeditiously as possible. The counselor will assist the veteran in developing a suitable program and determine whether a change of program is in order or if the veteran may be allowed to reenroll or continue in the same field of study."

Rufus H. Wilson
RUFUS H. WILSON
Chief Benefits Director

Distribution: CO: RPC 2900
FD FLD: RPC 2228 plus 20 additional copies to Finance in ROA; 201, 10 copies; 5 add'l copies to each educational liaison representative in ROA; VBC and VROC, 1 each; SAA and schools per VA Form 3-7225 and 3-7225a
EX: HNSO and AR, 1 each

DELGADO JUNIOR COLLEGE
615 City Park Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70119
April 17, 1975

1. Approval Criteria (Chapters 34, 35 and 36 of Title 38 U. S. Code)

   A. Required by Section 1775, Title 38 U. S. Code and VA Regulation 14253.

      1. The school will maintain adequate records to show the progress of each veteran and eligible person.

      2. The school will maintain a written record of the previous education and training of the veteran or eligible person and clearly indicate the appropriate credit allowed for previous education and training and will shorten the training period accordingly. The veteran or eligible person and the Veterans Administration will be so notified. (see Note #1)

   B. Other Approval Criteria under Section 1778, Title 33 U. S. Code and VA Regulation 14258, effective at the beginning of the 1975 Fall semester.

      1. In the case of a transfer student, the veteran or eligible person will not be certified to the Veterans Administration unless eligible to reenter the institution from which transfering. Those transfering from institutions not under the control of the State Board of Education must, in addition, have an overall average of "C" on all hours pursued.

      2. The following criteria will determine whether a veteran or eligible person is entitled to monetary benefits from the VA in so far as probations, suspensions and readmissions are concerned. The school may utilize VA Form 22-1999b to advise the VA to terminate benefits as appropriate. In the case of those whose benefits have been terminated for other reasons, the policy will be adhered to before reenrolling a veteran or other eligible person for VA benefits.

         a. A full-time or part-time veteran or eligible person who does not make a "D" average (1.0) on all hours pursued during a semester will have his VA benefits terminated for one semester.

         b. A full-time or part-time veteran or eligible person who makes an average ranging from a 1.0 to 1.5 on all hours pursued during a semester will be placed on probation.

         c. A veteran or eligible person on probation will be given one semester to make a "C" average (2.0) on all hours pursued during that semester which will remove him from probation; if he does not make a "C" average on all hours pursued during the semester, he will have his VA benefits terminated for one semester.

d. After the lapse of one semester, a veteran or eligible person may re-enter on probation but he must make a "C" average on all hours pursued during the semester, or he will have his VA benefits terminated again.

e. A veteran or eligible person who resigns after nine weeks of a semester will receive at the time of withdrawal,grades of WA, WB, WC, WD, or F; these grades will be used in computing his academic status.

f. A veteran or eligible person whose benefits would be terminated at the end of the Spring semester under (a), (c), or (d) above may continue to receive benefits during the summer but he will not be eligible for benefits during the fall.

3. Suggestions and recommendations (not considered approval criteria).

a. Special attention by all concerned should be given in order to prevent veterans and other eligible persons from receiving benefits based upon the repetition of a course for which credit has already been earned, or for a grade of "I" unless the"I"becomes a "F".

b. Reasonable control should be established to prevent promiscuous dropping and adding of courses and the changing from one program to another program. It is possible that improvement in this area could be obtained if the counseling program were enhanced.

NOTE: I

All enrollment certification forms have an item marked "credit allowed for previous training" (required on first enrollment). Either the word "none" or the number of credit hours allowed for prior training must be reported to the VA when the enrollment document is submitted to the VA. If an excessive delay occurs in the evaluation of a person's prior training, the school may submit the enrollment document with a notation under "credit allowed" as follows, "deferred". It is required that this information be furnished the VA and that the length of the period certified in a particular program at Delgado be governed by the amount of credit allowed. For example, a veteran or eligible person enrolled in an associate degree program at Delgado who received thirty (30) semester hours of transfer credit should not be enrolled for as long as one who makes his original entry in college without any credit being allowed. When a veteran or eligible person changes his program, for example, from associate degree in Environmental Health Technology to one in Business Administration, the school must evaluate the amount of credit allowed for the course pursued under the first degree program. The VA will be advised of the number of credit hours allowed and the number of credit hours lost in the transfer from one program to another. If the veteran is already receiving benefits,you may utilize VA Form 22-1999b for this purpose. Obviously, the new ending date must be established. If the VA determines that there is excessive loss of credit, a change in program may be involved and in some instances, the veteran may not be entitled to further benefits unless a favorable determination is made by the VA counselor.

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

TO Paul L. Duell, Director

FROM E. O. Forman, Supervisor

SUBJECT Delgado Junior College

DATE April 8, 1975

MESSAGE

Mr. Keith, the Veteran's Coordinator at Delgado Junior College has arranged for State Approving Agency and VA officials to meet with the college officials for the discussion of our findings when we made our supervisory visit and the VA made their compliance survey check. The meeting is scheduled for 10:00 A.M. on April 18, 1975 at Delgado Junior College.

In accordance with our discussions, a letter has been typed, addressed to the president with an attachment indicated the additional criteria of approval. It is suggested that you give this to Mr. Thames at the time of our meeting on April 18, 1975.

E. O. Forman

er

Attachments

ARTHUR L. MALLORY
[illegible]

Area Code 314
751-3487

State of Missouri
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
P. O. BOX [illegible]
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101

June 29, 1978

Mr. John Hutchens
Educational Program Director
Texas Education Agency
201 East Eleventh St.
Austin, TX 78701

Dear John:

I am sorry that I missed your call regarding the study of Minimum Standards. My answers to the specific questions in this questionnaire are as follows:

I. STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

a. Nearly all of the accredited institutions of higher learning in this state measure progress by a graduated grade point average. For example, a college may require a 1.5 grade point average the first year, a 1.75 average at mid-year the second year, and a cumulative average of 2.0 thereafter on the basis of 4.0 for an A.

b. It is my understanding that Appendix "O" authorizes the granting of a waiver to the unsatisfactory progress requirement of the law if the school's established policies and regulations have the effect of meeting the requirements of the law. I do not understand how it would be possible for the established policies and regulations to have the effect of meeting the requirements of the law unless they actually state the provisions of the law. For this reason, we have recommended no waivers under the provisions of this circular.

II. SEAT TIME

a. Most accredited institutions of higher learning in this state measure full time training for undergraduate courses (leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree) on the basis of a minimum of 12 semester credit hours. The measurement of full time training for graduate courses varies.

b. Most accredited IHL's base the semester credit hour on one scheduled 50-minute session of classroom per week for one semester. Two class sessions per week are required for laboratory courses.

Mr. John Hutchens
Page 2
June 29, 1978

Missouri

III. RECORDS

a. Most of the accredited institutions of higher learning in this state use electronic data processing for scheduling and recording grades. The computers are of tremendous help in both cases.

b. Several colleges and universities in this state have excellent record keeping systems. The University of Missouri-Columbia, Columbia, Missouri has an outstanding record keeping system.

c. The most serious problem in record keeping seems to be communications between various departments, divisions, and offices within the institutions. It is essential that admissions offices and deans furnish veterans' certifying officials with accurate and complete information so that accurate and prompt certifications may be made to the Veterans Administration, and so that the student's current status may be known at all times.

IV. SAFEGUARDS

a. The most serious abuse has been the so called "open door" policy of some educational institutions. The institutions have permitted students to withdraw without credit and without penalty at any time and to reenroll the succeeding semester after having received no credit or with a record of failures. Also, students have been permitted to take substantial numbers of courses that do not lead to their educational objective.

b. The abuses described above have seriously affected the veterans education program.

c. The State Approving Agency of Missouri, with the assistance of an advisory committee representing colleges and universities and the Veterans Administration, developed Minimum Standards for the continued approval of courses for the education of veterans. These standards were officially adopted by the State Board of Education and registered with the Secretary of State. They were distributed to all approved schools with instructions that the schools must develop policies and procedures to implement the Minimum Standards. The schools have cooperated, and in nearly all cases, they are now enforcing policies and procedures to comply with the Minimum Standards. It is particularly satisfying to note that several

Missouri

schools have adopted new policies and procedures for all students as a result of complying with the Minimum Standards for Veterans' Education.

V. RECOMMENDATION

We have no recommendations at this time for changes in the Standards of Progress.

Very truly yours,

Paul

Paul S. Smelser, Director
Veterans' Education

PSS/kjh

cc: William Shannon
Dean Aschim

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE CAPITOL
HELENA, MONTANA 59601
(406) 449-3095

Georgia Rice
Superintendent

June 28, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Ave.
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

At the request of Dean Aschim, President of the National Association of State Approving Agencies, we are responding with the following general comments pertaining to degree granting institutions which we understand may aid you in your study:

1. Standards of Progress.

   - Montana has 14 degree granting institutions.
   - All measures in credit hours.
   - All use punitive grading.
   - All have a probation and suspension system (not always enforced).
   - None consider 12 hours of failure as unsatisfactory progress.

2. Contact Hours or Seat Time.

   - 12 institutions consider 12 credit hours as full time attendance.
   - One considers 8 credit hours, another 14 credit hours as full time.
   - Credit is assigned on the basis of one class hour per week, per term for one credit hour.

3. Record Keeping.

   - Most records are hand and eye reviewed.
   - Computers are in use, but only one school has a computer printout showing all pertinent data on the veterans enrolled.

   - Some problems encountered are:

     1. Lack of attendance checks.
     2. Poor instructor records.
     3. Lack of Policy enforcement.

Affirmative Action – EEO Employer

Montana

4. Safeguards the Schools are Using.
    - Registrars are making periodic checks on attendance and grades earned by the veterans.
    - There is an increasing use of computers.
    - Specific policies affecting veterans are printed as such in the catalog.

5. Recommendations.
    - Eliminate the 12 hours of failure as unsatisfactory progress, and in its place require a specific grade point average.
    - Eliminate non-punitive grading.
    - Shift the onus from the schools to the veterans.
    - With a reduction in the number of veterans in training, it seems that the 85-15 ratio rule could be eliminated.

We realize that this response is sketchy; however, trust that it is helpful.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM C. HOWARD
Manager, Veterans Education

WCH:sj

cc: Dean Aschim
G.K. Gessner

NEBRASKA STATE APPROVING AGENCY

1. Question: How do institutions measure students' progress?

   Answer: The measurement of students' progress varies from institution to institution and from one instructor to another. Some institutions give mid-term (quarter) warning signals popularly known in academic circles as "down slip" while others do not. Some instructors monitor students' progress by constant examinations or by quizzes while others rely on mid-term tests and finals. In some institutions, the students contract with the instructors what grade they expect to get out of a course, set their own goals, and work toward the achievement. Progress is measured on the attainment of the pre-set goals. In whatever form it takes, there are sincere efforts made at the institutions to ensure that students are making normal progress. Students who slack behind in their academic pursuits are either placed on probation or suspended, depending on the length and level of progress or lack of it.

2. Question: What are their views of Appendix O 'Revised'?

   Answer: Although Revised Appendix O has relaxed some of the requirements relative to the original Standard of Progress concept (DVB Circular 20-76-84, December 17, 1976) it still imposes rigidity in defining certain educational terms in a way diametrically opposed to how institutions define them. Punitive and non-punitive grading system is a case in point. Another area of concern among our institutions is the requirement in Appendix O, Revised, that institutions recompute Standard of Progress retroactively to December 1976 under the revised guidelines. This they feel is an encroachment on their time for unnecessary paper work.

3. Question: How do institutions measure full-time student?

   Answer: A student is considered full-time if he/she carries an academic load of 12-16 credit(quarter or semester) hours per quarter or semester.

4. Question: What basis do institutions assign credit relative to class time?

   Answer: The number of class hours of attendance per week is equal to the number of credits assigned to the course. One hour of attendance is equivalent to fifty minutes of class attendance. For each credit assigned to a course, a student is required to spend twice as much time for outside work. Hence for a 3 hour credit, a student is required to attend classes for 3 hours a week and to spend twice that amount of time for outside preparation on that course.

5. Question: What problems, if any, do institutions have regarding record-keeping requirements?

   Answer: The number of records an institution is required to keep on each student generally, and the specific requirements on those who receive benefits from the Veterans Administration, makes efficiency in school administration a bundle of paper mess. The end result is increase in administrative cost and inefficient utilization of clerical personnel time. There is practically no financial relief from the agencies which require the barrage of records. Most of the records required could be consolidated if there was some coordination among the various agencies. Duplication of reportings could be minimized if there was some cooperation among govern-

NEBRASKA STATE APPROVING AGENCY Nebraska

6. Question: If they have a computer system, what are they doing to be of help to other schools?

   Answer: Most schools that have a computerized system do so mainly for its own purposes and not for the use of other schools, unless they are within a network system.

7. Question: Do institutions feel there are abuses to these requirements?

   Answer: No, nothing has actually been voiced out in this direction.

Recommendations to change V.A. requirements of Standard of Progress

1. The waiver provisions of Appendix G should be dropped since such a waiver does not serve the interest of the veteran students.
2. The 12 credit of full-time load of failing grade (F's) at the last semester or quarter requirement on revised Standard of Progress should be reviewed in terms of its merits. If the intent is to help and foster student graduation within a reasonable approved period of time, such record review should be done much earlier in the academic journey, possibly during the junior year. This will highlight to the veteran student what is needed to meet graduation requirements.
3. Mitigating circumstances needs much stricter definition to avoid its use in covering up unjustifiable circumstances.

NEVADA COMMISSION ON
POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONAL AUTHORIZATION

July 1, 1978

Dr. Wm. G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

I have been contacted by Dean Aschim, President of the National Association of State Approving Agencies, referent to the study which you are conducting under contract with the Veterans Administration.

I introduce my comments by indicating that it is practically impossible to give more than a highly subjective response to questions which have such great extension and breadth depending upon the number and variety of institutions. Hopefully, some validation will be attained through the onsight visits with the selected institutions.

A. The following describes the basic ways in which standards of progress are measured in Nevada among IHL's:
   1. Community Colleges--non punitive grading system. For VA purposes length of approved program for receipt of degree becomes the standard.

   2. Universities (public and private)--Punitive grading system; student is placed on probation when failing to meet acceptable GPA.

   They all perceive Appendix O to be confusing and burdensome, but have not given or been invited to give any alternate procedure.

B. Measure for full time students.
   1. Undergraduate--15 fifty minute sessions for one semester credit.

   2. Graduate--No set amount equal with all institutions. Majority observe amount given in paragraph B.1.

   3. Full time students are those taking 12 credit hours or more per semester, or equivalency of that during shorter than semester terms.

C. Record Keeping Requirements.
   The biggest problem that schools have is the personnel requirements to consistantly and timely make updates in records and report necessary changes to the VARO. This is improving.

Merlin D. Anderson, *Administrator* · Cynthia W. Cunningham, *Chairperson*
Commission Members:
[illegible] Lenz, *Vice Chairperson*, Nancy [illegible], Penny [illegible], Norman [illegible], Jim Sanford, Woodrow Wilson

STATE CAPITOL COMPLEX · [illegible] N. CURRY STREET · CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89710 · PHONE (702) 885-[illegible]

Nevada SAA Response to Questionnaire
Page 2
July 1, 1978

Nevada

C. The institutions generally feel that the intentional abuses are small; somewhere around 3% or less. The other non-intentional problems are ones that are going to have to be handled by constantly working with students and institutions.

They have generally felt that where it can be demonstrated that the abuse is intentional then criminal action should be taken against the abusers.

E. I believe that one of the most effective ways to change the regulations would be to have a select group comprised of SAA's and IHL representatives sit down and "hammer out" procedures which could then be recommended to the VA for review and appropriate action. Any regulation which comes unilaterally or where the hearing process is only perfunctory, sets the stage for division and dispute.

Sincerely,

Merlin D. Anderson, Administrator

MDA:ve

cc: Dean Aschim

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12230

ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

June 14, 1978

Mr. William Shannon and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

A short time ago I sent you material relative to the questions you raised about rules of the Veterans Administration.

I have identified two more items that you may find helpful in your study and am enclosing them.

Sincerely,

Alvin P. Lierheimer

APL:bw
Enc.

NY State Education Department

Excerpt

Testimony Submitted To:

Committee on Veterans Affairs

Sub-Committee on Education and Training

United States House of Representatives

Washington, D.C.

19 May 1977

By:

Dr. John J. Connolly, President
Dutchess Community College
Poughkeepsie, New York

place, and the only possible way to measure that learning, is by assessing the amount of time a student spends on his or her seat in the classroom. This is patently absurd, but some V.A. regulations indicate a strong adherence to this principle. For example, the new regulation on computation of full or part-time status for summer session now utilizes contact hours as well as credit hours as a measure. Contact hours are simply the number of class hours for which a class meets. Colleges, recognizing that there are other important factors in learning, typically assign another indicator, credit hours, as a measure not simply of class time - or seat time - but of the total worth of the learning expected.

The outcome of these modifications is that veterans may not be able to be certified for many innovative new courses that are designed to be both educationally and fiscally productive. These newer methods are frequently not dependent upon "seat time" and often result in more cost effective and educationally effective learning, mutually compatible objectives which colleges are striving to achieve in this day of restricted budgets.

It is easy to imagine the abuses this change was designed to prevent, but ar also imagine many more abuses - and educational impediments for students - it will now create!

The Two Year Rule promulgated by the V.A. has also posed obstacles for community colleges and their students. Since you are all familiar with the now infamous rule I will not elaborate it in detail, but let me describe two of the problems it has created. First, a problem for students. Dutchess Community College offers two unique programs of special interest to veterans. One, Dental Lab Technology is designed to train students to make various dental devices such as bridges and crowns. Among its objectives is an interest to meet the educational needs of paraplegic patients, most of whom are veterans, residing at Castle Point Veterans Administration Hospital. It is supported by a grant from the Veterans Administration and is an innovative effort, providing education and career opportunity for paraplegic veterans who previously could look forward only to a non-productive, wheelchair-bound existence; not life, I emphasize, but existence! However, because the program is very new and because critical components of the laboratory work are offered at the Castle Point V.A. Hospital rather than on our campus, this program and center will have to be approved by the State Education Department, which is already bogged down with the administration of V.A. regulations, before the Administrator could approve the enrollment of an eligible veteran in these courses. The second program, Spinal Cord Technology, is the only one of its kind in the country and is supported by a V.A. contract. The V.A., in fact, sends people to Dutchess County from all over the country to prepare them to care for patients with severe spinal cord injuries. Again, much of the course work is taken at the Castle Point V.A. Hospital rather than on campus and, as a result of the Two Year Rule, there is a strong potential exposure for both our College and the students involved. What an incongruous set of circumstances could result. A Veterans Administration supported and initiated program, servicing paraplegic veterans in one case, who then might not be eligible for support to avail themselves of the program because of a V.A. regulation. This is "Catch 22" personified.

In addition, there is an institutional problem. It took an administrator and his secretary at Dutchess forty-two hours to prepare the necessary forms for submission to the State Education Department – which must now approve our fourteen extension centers which have been operating for six years, including during a full reaccreditation of our College. We estimate it will take seventeen hours of administrative time each semester to file the various information forms necessary for continuous approval. If our centers are not visited in the near future - and the State Education Department must visit five-hundred similar operations in New York - we could have a serious problem with the V.A. concerning overpayments.

The 85-15 rule is another example of paperwork and confusion generated by a V.A. regulation. First, it necessitated our computing the percentage of veterans enrolled at each of our off-campus centers and on campus in each curriculum and then applying for a waiver as no more than 35% of our enrollment at any site is made up of veterans. While the administrative time required is not great - we estimate about eleven hours - it is nonetheless an additional burden.

Even more importantly, the evolution of the 85-15 rule is an excellent example of the confusion that is frequently generated by regulations promulgated by the veterans administration. Most of the communications regarding new regulations, rules or policies come in the form of Department of Veterans Benefits (DVB) circulars. Many times it is difficult to tell whether the item contained in the circ. is a new policy or a proposed policy or whether it is subject to modifications and must still go through congressional hearings. The Veterans Administration does not seem to communicate its intentions to representative institutions or associations, to "test the water," before it publishes these circulars. As a result, huge outcries occasionally result and then, recognizing the problem - albeit belatedly - the V.A. "backs-off" the regulation or attempts a clarification or modification. In the interim, college and university administrators spend a great deal of time and energy attempting to formulate a response to the regulations, and students, who may have to be alerted to the potential difficulty, expend a great deal of anxiety.

Such a case in point is the impact of the 85–15 rule at Dutchess. The rule when first issued called for computing the ratio of enrolled veterans in each Dutchess Community College curriculum. To this ratio was to be added the ratio of federal aid recipients (BEOG and SEOG) at DCC. If the combined ratio in a curriculum exceeded 85% of the total enrollment in the curriculum, veterans would not be eligible for benefits. First, this would pose an obvious problem for the paraplegic veterans enrolled in our dental lab technology program, which I cited earlier. Secondly, the day our institution mailed its request for waiver letter, after spending the time computing the ratios for all of our thirty-five cirricula, the regulation was modified to require this procedure only of institutions whose veteran enrollment exceeded 35% of its total enrollment. More than a full day's work was wasted!

A second example deals with the new regulations for summer session study I mentioned earlier. We had originally been told by our liaison with the V.A., our V.R.O. (Vet Rep on Campus), an excellent person, I might add, that information he had received indicated only contact hours would be used to determine full and part-time status and, as a result, veterans benefits. For three weeks we labored under this misinterpretation and counseled students that enrollment in a summer typing course, which has five contact hours and carries two credits, would be considered as full-time enrollment, and would receive full-time benefits, while students in most math, English, history, business, engineering and other courses, which meet for three contact hours and carry three credits, an indicator of a greater academic effort and worth, would be considered as enrolled in part-time study. Likewise, the student enrolled in a one credit physical education course would be considered half-time, on a par with the English, math or business student.

Only on Tuesday of this week, did we discover that this interpretation was incorrect and that both contact and credit hours would be used in making the necessary

Excerpt 4:

Statement By

Gordon M. Ambach
Executive Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner-Designate
The University of The State of New York
The State Education Department

Before the

Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, DC

Wednesday
June 29, 1977

of registration the number and percentage of students in each program, for each campus location, who receive G. I. benefits or any form of Federal or institutional aid.

Even sophisticated information systems would require extensive and costly reprogramming to do this. For less automated institutions, compliance would be impossible. The Veterans Administration would be mandating institutional administrative procedures based on financial criteria, while ignoring sound educational criteria: student needs, abilities and program capacity. There is no educational purpose for these regulations. Their efficacy is, by the VA's own admission, difficult to prove.

Worse, the inclusion of such students operationally denies entitled benefits to veterans in urban areas, in graduate programs, and in institutions with large numbers of such grants. These educational programs are available to others. They have been approved by State Approving Agencies, and are in full compliance with the law. Veterans should not be denied arbitrarily the right to enroll.

Academic Credit vs. Contact Hours

The Veterans Administration insists that the only possible measure of learning is the assessment of the number of hours students spend in the classroom. As the American educational system broadens its clientele (half of which are now over 21), it has shifted to more advanced and innovative modes of study. There are excellent examples of high-quality productive use of innovative methods. Quality education meeting the needs of varied segments of our society necessarily results from a variety of approaches.

ATTACHMEN

Excerpt of:

Statement by

Ewald B. Nyquist
President, The University of the State of New York
and Commissioner of Education

Before the

Subcommittee on Education and Training
Committee on Veterans' Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives

8:30 AM, EDT
Thursday, May 19, 1977

Washington, DC

Excerpt

I should now like to address myself to some of the specific problems created by the recent flood of Veterans Administration Circulars, revised circulars, addendums and directives, most of which have tremendous implications for the academic policies and procedures of the nation's colleges.

Academic Credit vs. Contact Hours

I am well aware that in some instances the so-called time-shortened programs have been abused, but it is an educationally viable concept. I consider it the responsibility of my Department to closely evaluate and monitor all such programs. In view of the variety of educational needs of the various segments of our society and the fact that there are many excellent examples of valid educational programs utilizing this non-traditional concept, I would never propose a system that attempted to make all postsecondary programs fit a common mold. Quality education can and does result from a variety of approaches. I, therefore, object most strenuously to the Veterans Administration rule that requires one contact hour per week per credit for a minimum of 15 weeks a semester, or a minimum of 10 weeks a quarter. The Veterans Administration is saying that the educational value of college credits awarded can be measured solely by the minutes a student sits in a classroom. Notwithstanding the fact that the law makes no provision for the Administrator to exercise such judgment relative to degree programs, this requirement should be immediately rescinded. I strongly urge that evaluation of degree programs, including the format and methodology utilized, be restored in full to the States and the regional accrediting bodies.

State University of New York
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

Associate Chancellor
for Community Colleges

June 20, 1978

Mr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

Neal Robbins asked that I write you regarding how the Veterans Administration regulations could be improved for community colleges.

I suppose that the obvious answers don't really help all that much. Over the years we have made several pleas for the federal government to include nontraditional-type programs and institutions in their planning, to consider ways of reducing burdensome reporting mechanisms, and to avoid making decisions on V.A. matters which could be made more efficiently at the state or local college level.

Besides the aforementioned, Dr. Connolly, President of Dutchess Community College, testified at a Committee on Veterans Affairs hearing in Washington last May. I am enclosing a copy of that presentation.

Hope this contributes to your thinking and planning.

Sincerely,

H Frederick Holmes

H. Frederick Holmes, Director
Community College Program Development

Enclosure

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA RALEIGH

Education Annex 2

July 3, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington MD 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

The attached represents the responses of the State Approving Agency for the State of North Carolina to the questions posed to us in connection with the study you are currently conducting for the Central Office of the Veterans Administration.

We appreciate the opportunity of making input and trust you will feel free to call upon us for whatever assistance we can be.

Very truly yours,

Gilmore W. Johnson

Gilmore W. Johnson, Director
Division of Veterans Education

GWJ:bd

Attachment

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS (North Carolina)

1. How do your institutions generally measure progress?

Approved institutions usually measure progress by requiring a grade point average which is progressive in that the beginning GPA is gradually raised as credits are earned to ensure that students will not come to the end of their programs with the credit hours requirement satisfied but with the GPA at a level which will not permit graduation. Specialized schools have a grading system that fits their own special needs, eg., cosmetology schools and flight schools.

2. What are your schools' and institutions' opinions on Appendix O?

The schools do not agree with Appendix O.

3. Seat time - How do your schools generally measure full time in your state?

Full time is measured by three different methods:

A. IHL's measure on a credit hour basis all degree courses.
B. NCD courses are measured on net hours of instruction for courses in which classroom instruction predominates and on contact hours (seat time) for courses in which lab or shop predominates.
C. Diploma and certificate courses in all trade schools are measured on contact hours (seat time).

4. On what basis do your institutions assign credit relative to class time?

Credit hours are assigned on the basis of one hour of classroom instruction per week per quarter or semester equal to one quarter hour of credit or one semester hour of credit. Lab hours are measured on the basis of two lab hours per/week for one credit hour and shop is measured on three hours per week per credit hour. Cooperative work experience is measured on ten hours per week for one credit hour.

5. What problems do your institutions have with VA record-keeping requirement;

The schools find it difficult to maintain two sets of records: One for their own institutional reporting requirementsfor the State and Accrediting bodies and another one for the VA.

6. Do any of your institutions have a computerized system and if so, what is it?

A high per cent of our approved schools have their own or access to a computer. The ones who do not have this equipment usually are small schools that have no need for highly sophisticated record-keeping equipment.

The equipment used by most of the schools is of the type that can store and recall all reasonable kinds of information. The problems arise by having to keep two sets of standards of progress or GPA computations on the veteran students.

North Carolina - 3

7. Do your schools have safeguards for curbing veteran abuses? What are their general feelings concerning veteran abuses?

After the enactment of P. L. 93-508 the State Approving Agency was given the authority to require accredited schools to implement safeguards that they did not have the authority to do previously.

We are listing below the major areas of abuses on the part of veterans who were receiving educational benefits under the GI Bill.

1. Took advantage of a non-punitive grading system and remained in school without earning credit toward graduation.

2. Stayed on in school after earning enough credits to graduate.

3. Left school and did not return unearned checks.

4. Reduced class load and did not notify the certifying official.

5. Repeated subjects to earn a higher grade and was paid twice.

6. Received advance payment and did not report to school.

The schools have established safeguards to curb the abuses that were within their control. However, during the period when the congress and the VA's attitude was more lenient toward paying the veteran, there were procedures that were not within the power of the schools to stop. Most of these have been corrected by recent legislation.

8. Do you have any recommended changes concerning VA Regulations or Title 38 on satisfactory progress?

It is my belief that an educational institution has the right within the limits set by the state laws to establish whatever kind of policies and procedures the state may permit to conduct an educational program. Such institutions may have requirements for earning a Degree but may not have a policy for dismissing students who do not produce work that satisfies the level of quality set for the awarding of credit.

When an institution is approved to enroll veterans under the GI Bill, the State Approving Agency should be given the authority to set standards for approval within the state statutes.

The Federal Government should not be allowed under any law to enter into this decision making.

The State Approving Agency that is not responsible can be called to show that it is accountable; but the Federal Government should not be allowed to enter into laying down standards to the institutions directly or indirectly through the State Approving Agency.

State of Oklahoma
State Accrediting Agency
WILEY POST BUILDING
521-3684
P O BOX 53067 CAPITOL STATION
OKLAHOMA CITY OKLAHOMA 73105

G C BALL
DIRECTOR

E R JEFFERS
SUPERVISOR

June 29, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

SUBJECT: Response to study conducted on standards of progress and approval process.

I. Standards of Progress

A. How institutions measure progress?

Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), in Oklahoma follow the minimum grade point average as established by the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education. (See exhibit A). Unfortunately the lattitude of establishing each institutional grading system varies from the standard of A, B, C, D, & F to A, B, C, D, & NC. NC meaning no credit where no grade points are entered on the student's transcript. Therefore, NC is not computed in the grade point average (GPA). The student is dropped at the end of the semester or a work load change (if less than the minimum full time; in Oklahoma 12 hours is the acceptable full time minimum), is reported to the VA, thus creating an overpayment. Another example is the 3 grade level system or the Mastery Grading System.

A - Master with Honors
B - Mastery - student has mastered the skills
C - Credit given

This is a Non Punitive grading system, where by definition a student cannot receive a punitive grade. If a student does not receive an A, B or C then nothing is entered on his transcript. In both the above examples the regional VA adjusts the overpayment according to the guidelines set forth in DVB Circular 20-76-84, Appendix M.

B. Evaluation of DVB Circular 20-76-84, Appendix O, Revised, dated February 3, 1978.

This expanded concept of unsatisfactory progress to include notification to the VA when the student accumulates punitive grades in more hours than the school's minimum full time requirement, has received negative reaction from a majority of the institutions in Oklahoma. These reactions range from, it is good that the VA has established

Oklahoma

some minimum guidelines by which unsatisfactory progress can be monitored, however, why not wait because this will be changed. Another reaction is the rights of the institution to establish its own policy, are again being infringed upon by the federal government, even though this provision may be waived.

II. Seat Time (Classroom Time)

A. How do institutions measure full time students per semester, term, quarter, etc.?
One semester hour of credit equals one 50 to 55 minute lecture period per week. In most instances the 18 week per semester has been reduced to 16 weeks. Where lab time is used, one semester hour of credit varies from 2 to 4 lab hours.

III. Records:

A. Does school have a computer system? If so, can it be helpful?
Approximately one year ago the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education established a computerized system called the Central Unit Record Data System. This system ties in all the public schools in Oklahoma to the State Higher Regents office. This data includes student records, courses enrolled, grades, faculty, etc. In talking to the Higher Regents office it was learned that this system has been very beneficial in enabling the Regents to maintain up to date information on its institutions. The Regents have requested participation from the private institutions on a voluntarily basis.

B. Are there any record systems which can be helpful to other schools?
One record system which has helped is requiring all institutions to maintain transcripts of work completed at other institutions prior to the enrollment of the veteran with the VA. Where not feasible, the adjustment should be made immediately when the transcript is received.

Another system is requiring a degree plan check list on each student. This check list is completed by the registrar before the veteran is enrolled with the VA. This record is made available as part of the supervision process.

C. General problem is record keeping.
Most of the IHL institutions in Oklahoma have established a satisfactory record system to comply with the standards required by the VA and SAA. This has been accomplished by the collective efforts of the Oklahoma Higher Regents, VA and SAA agencies and the cooperation of the institutions.

The problem arises when there is a communication breakdown. This occurs through a change in personnel, lack of cooperation between departments within the institution and the continuous changing of regulations without the proper preparation and education of personnel who need to know. The result is the veteran suffers from an overpayment.

Oklahoma

The particular problems associated with records are:
1. Not timely reporting work load changes to the VA.
2. Improper maintenance of transcripts to include reporting credit to the VA.
3. Incorrect certification to the VA whereas veterans are allowed to pursue courses already successfully completed.
4. Failure to notify the VA of degree program changes.
5. Failure to make a timely report of unstaisfactory progress which allows veteran to re-enroll and pursue a course until discovered during scheduled surveys.

IV. Safeguards to prevent abuses.

The SAA and regional VA are working together to eliminate overpayments of veterans in the IHL institutions. The methods used to accomplish this are:

(1) Communication with the school representative. This is done by periodic workshops, where the representatives of the institution, VA and SAA meet and discuss new regulations and ways of eliminating abuses.

(2) The mailing out of information bulletins to prospective institutions regarding changes in regulations, etc.

(3) The proper training of SAA personnel to develop a professional attitude. This is accomplished also by periodic workshops within the SAA and evaluation of the field representative's performances.

(4) Where discrepancies have occurred within an institution, an exit interview is required whereby all of the discrepancies are discussed in detail, with recommendations from both the school and field representatives, as to the solutions required. From this, follow-up visits are made to determine if these solutions are working and that the discrepancies have not recurred.

V. Recommendation on changes in VA regulations or language on standards of progress.

In order to solicit the cooperation of the Institutions of Higher Education, I believe it is imperative that before a VA regulation is implemented that sufficient time be allowed for review and input of information from the institution, SAA and VA regional office.

In addition, once a regulation is adopted, there should be sufficient time provided to educate and implement these changes before the effective date of the change.

Many of the complaints received from the institution are the too often regularity of the changing of the regulations as well as the complicated

Oklahoma

and hard-to-comprehend language used. The word used to describe what I am saying is "KISS" Keep It Simple Stupid!

Thank you for allowing me this time to express my comments. If additional information is needed, please contact me.

Yours very truly,

STATE ACCREDITING AGENCY

M. G. Woolley
Supervisor

MGW:kg

cc: Dean Aschim, President
NASAA, Iowa

John A. Hutchens
Regional Vice President, Texas

VERNE A. DUNCAN
[illegible]
[illegible]

STATE OF OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
942 LANCASTER DR. N.E.
SALEM, OREGON 97310

July 6, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Doctor Shannon:

This letter is in answer to a phone request for information.

1. How do institutions measure progress?

   The most accepted standard is the A through D mark and is recorded at the end of the term. A grade of pass (P) or no pass (NP) are also used but are limited for each student. A "W" is used for withdrawal and in some institutions is used in computation of GPA. Some institutions require a completion of so many credits with a passing grade for each term.

2. What basis do institutions use to assign credit?

   One credit is given for one hour of instruction each week for no less than 10 weeks.

3. What problems do institutions have with record keeping?

   Institutions need to keep active records for indefinite periods of time because 80 percent of the head count in the community colleges is part-time students.

4. What are institutions doing to curb abuses?

   Many schools have reverted to the standard grading systems. They have warned students of the danger of "W's" on their transcripts and are requiring more accountability for completion of courses started.

Oregon

5. Recommendations for changes to improve laws or regulations?

Institutions are functioning and complying with Satisfactory Progress Policies. Laws and Regulations should be edited and obsolete ones should be discarded.

Cordially,

Wendell E. Curry

Wendell E. Curry
Coordinator
Private Vocational School
Licensing
(503) 378-8568

WEC:km
cc - Dean Aschim

South Carolina

STATEMENT

of

MARVIN P. BUSBEE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
STATE APPROVING AGENCIES

before

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

U. S. SENATE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

June 29, 1977

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

On behalf of the National Association of State Approving Agencies, I appreciate this opportunity to testify before your committee regarding certain provisions of Public 94-502. I am an employee of the State of South Carolina, Department of Education. My position is Chief Supervisor of the State Approving Section and I have been affiliated with this Section for 30 years.

The Congress, in its infinite wisdom, has demonstrated through the enactment of this law and prior laws, that it is cognizant of its responsibilities to provide opportunities to servicemen and women and their dependents for vocational readjustment and restoring lost educational opportunities and its responsibilities in safeguarding the tax payers' money.

The Veterans' Administration has demonstrated that it is aware of the responsibilities assigned it by Congress, and also of its responsibilities to the American taxpayer. In making an all out effort to see that veterans and other eligible persons are afforded the very best educational opportunities, it appears the V.A. has not made itself popular with certain segments of the educational community, however, when you hear, see or read of the millions of dollars of overpayments which have been made, you become aware of the needs of those safe-

South Carolina

guards included in 94-502 and in the implementation by the Veterans Administration.

Although the State Approving Agencies do not have basic responsibility for enforcing the 85-15 percent ratio requirement, we do have the responsibility to establish an exchange of information pertaining to activities of educational institutions, with particular attention being given to the enforcement of approval standards, enforcement of enrollment restrictions, and fraudulent and other criminal activities on the part of persons connected with educational institutions in which eligible persons or veterans are enrolled. As stated last year, anything that affects the education and training program affects State Approving Agencies and even though definite duties, functions, and responsibilities are conferred upon the Veterans Administration, and State Approval Agencies, all of us are on the same ball team, and should be working collectively in carrying out the responsibilities assigned by the Congress.

85-15% Ratio Requirements

Due to the large number of students receiving basic educational opportunity grants (BEOG) and supplementary educational opportunity grants (SEOG), many veterans could have been deprived of needed and meaningful education. This was remedied by your efforts in having the Veterans Administration extend their temporary waiver for one (1) year.

We recommend that serious consideration be given in eliminating BEOG and SEOG recipients from being counted as veterans.

The Veterans Administration Regional Office (Columbia, S. C.) states that the majority (all but one course) have met the current waiver requirements with the total effect being a tremendous paper exercise.

In order to relieve both parties of work that appears to be unnecessary, it is suggested that serious consideration be given to exclude those schools in which veteran enrollment constitutes less than fifty percent (50%) of total enrollment based on full time equivalency. This will relieve both

South Carolina

V.A. and schools in participating in an exercise in which the answer is obvious.

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS - DVB Circular 20-76-84, Appendix M (Prohibition of Educational Assistance Payments for courses not counted to satisfy graduation requirements) and Appendix O (Unsatisfactory Progress).

During the fall of 1975, State Approving Agencies were required by DVB Circular 20-75-84 to establish broad minimum standards of progress for schools with courses approved under U. S. Code 38, 1775 (Accredited). It was the school's responsibility to develop their own specific standards of progress within the frame work that had been established by the State Approving Agencies and submit their standards to the appropriate State Approving Agency for approval. The minimum standards required that adequate records be kept by the school to show the progress of each eligible person; be sufficient to show continued pursuit at the rate for which enrolled and progress being made; and include the final grade in each subject for each term, quarter or semester. The policy required that the standards of progress be specific enough to determine the point in time when the eligible person ceased to make satisfactory progress so that educational benefits could be discontinued in a timely fashion. Included in the policy must also be the grade or grade point average that will be maintained if the student is to graduate.

Schools were required to assess progress by considering subjects attempted versus subjects completed. Completion meant that a grade must be assigned and calculated in his grade point average. Schools were required to indicate that they, in their standards, had sufficient capability to promptly report not only unsatisfactory progress, but also drops, withdrawals, and unscheduled interruptions.

The Veterans Administration, in transmitting regulations, encouraged State Approving Agencies to impose additional criteria such as students withdrawing from a course after mid-term receive an "F" for the course in the absence of extenuating circumstances.

South Carolina

Even though a State Approving Agency had authority to require these standards of progress, it was necessary to accomplish a "selling" job to the school to adopt specific guidelines within our broad minimum standards. Such things as measureable grades for all subjects dropped after mid-term was stronger than normally contained in the standards of progress for the majority of schools.

Standards of progress were designed to monitor pursuit, terminations, training time, withdrawals without penalty, nonpunitive grades, minimum grade point averages and other factors. The purpose was to eliminate payments to eligible persons for which they were not entitled. These standards have been successful in preventing abuses inasmuch as punitive grades are required to be assigned to courses dropped after a specified time - usually mid-term. This in no way is meant to imply that standards of progress are a cure all or that additional regulations are not needed to protect the taxpayer.

Appendix "M" is for the purpose of prohibiting payment of educational benefits for auditing a course or for a course which is not used in computing graduation requirements, including any course from which the student withdraws, unless there is a finding of mitigating circumstances causing the withdrawal. V. A. Regulation 14253 governs the approval of an accredited course and sets forth the qualifications (including standards of progress) schools must meet. The terminology and examples of "M" are confusing to schools and State Approving Agencies. School officials immediately compare these circulars to the "Standards of Progress" and find themselves operating under two sets of rules. Even though these appendixes may have as primary users V.A. Claim examiners in field and other stations, they have been distributed to school officials and cover letters and/or explanations were sent to schools by the various Veterans Administration Regional Offices.

For example, Appendix M states in definitions "Drop-add period: A reasonable brief period at the beginning of a term (not to exceed 30 days) officially designated by a school for unrestricted enrollment changes by students." The majority

South Carolina

of schools do have a drop-add period at which time the student may drop and add courses, Primarily, this drop-add period is for the purpose of establishing a date at which time courses can no longer be added. This is confusing to schools inasmuch as many State Approving Agencies have included in their standards of progress that a course may be dropped prior to mid-term without penalty in terms of progress. I realize that "W" is in terms of payment, but again it is confusing to school officials.

This circular also states the prohibition of educational benefits for a course which is not used in computing graduation requirements unless there is a finding of mitigating circumstances causing the withdrawal. State Approving Agencies went on record, by resolution adopted on March 17, 1976, supporting a regulation or law providing benefits for only those courses in which a final measureable grade was received. With this in mind, it appears that State Approving Agencies, the Congress and the Veterans Administration subscribe to the same principle.

MONTHLY CERTIFICATIONS OF TRAINING

In a statement before Subcommittee on Education, U. S. House of Representatives on May 6, 1976, I stated that State Approving Agencies concur that eligible persons receiving benefits should submit an attendance certificate authenticated by the school, stating that they are still attending the school, are in good standing, and are taking the course loads for which they are receiving benefits. I further stated that we believe that more responsibility for reporting any changes that affect educational allowances should be placed with the eligible person. It appears to me that the submission of monthly certifications would have a psychological effect on the recipients and make them aware that they must make a contribution to the process. Where else can you get a check without some proof that you are fulfilling your part of the contract?

State Approving Agencies, fully realizing their responsibilities, reported to the Veterans Administration and the House and Senate Committees on Veterans Affairs

South Carolina

in March of 1975, that lack of control permits excessive absences and repeating of courses, and eligible persons receiving educational allowances to which they are not entitled has led to large amounts of money paid, which is unnecessary and legally questionable. By resolution, we urged that steps be taken to prevent a continuation of this waste.

TWO YEAR RULE

It appears that consideration of a minor change of this rule could be made in which would eliminate any injustices that may be affecting veterans.

Unquestionably solid institutions from time to time expand their operations in terms of branches and extensions and also in offering new courses to meet the technological needs of our day and educational needs of the people.

Under the current rule some are in a position to wait two years to serve our veterans.

I would suggest for your consideration a minor change in section 1789 in adding an exception that would allow enrollments of an eligible veteran or eligible person in courses offered by branches and extensions, that a branch or extension must be considered as a separate school, with its own manager and administrative staff, faculty, facilities, student body and maintain sufficient records and files for V.A. purposes and meet a 25/75% ratio. The 25% veterans is used as the number of veterans enrolled in schools, according to statement of the V.A. is estimated to amount to 11.5% of total enrollment.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my presentation. I will be pleased to respond to any questions you may have.

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF VETERANS EDUCATION
STATE APPROVING AGENCY
C3-301 Cordell Hull Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

June 30, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kinsington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

The State Approving Agency for the State of Tennessee, responds to an inquiry from Mr. Gordon Guthrie, Florida State Approving Agency as follows:

1. Tennessee Educational Institutions measure progress by use of tests, oral and written; check points, and final examinations or a combination of all. Grading is designated by alphabet levels, generally.

   Opinions of Appendix O vary. Generally, it is considered to be definitive in nature and therefore is viewed with favor by institutions and the State Approving Agency.

2. Full-time benefits according to Veterans Administration regulations is 12 credit hours, or clock hours as prescribed by law.

   Fifty minutes for lecture and 100 minutes for laboratory is considered as "seat time" in course offerings.

3. Institutions in Tennessee have no problems with Veterans Administration record keeping.

4. All larger institutions use a data processing system. (Makes and models not a matter of record in this office).

   Smaller institutions process data manually.

5. To the best of my knowledge all institutions in the State of Tennessee have safeguards for curbing abuses by veterans and other eligible persons.

6. Institutions feel that the fee payable by the Veterans Administration for safeguarding against abuses should be increased.

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF VETERANS EDUCATION
STATE APPROVING AGENCY
C3-301 Cordell Hull Building
Nashville, Tennessee 37219

June 30, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kinsington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

The State Approving Agency for the State of Tennessee, responds to an inquiry from Mr. Gordon Guthrie, Florida State Approving Agency as follows:

1. Tennessee Educational Institutions measure progress by use of tests, oral and written; check points, and final examinations or a combination of all. Grading is designated by alphabet levels, generally.

   Opinions of Appendix O vary. Generally, it is considered to be definitive in nature and therefore is viewed with favor by institutions and the State Approving Agency.

2. Full-time benefits according to Veterans Administration regulations is 12 credit hours, or clock hours as prescribed by law.

   Fifty minutes for lecture and 100 minutes for laboratory is considered as "seat time" in course offerings.

3. Institutions in Tennessee have no problems with Veterans Administration record keeping.

4. All larger institutions use a data processing system. (Makes and models not a matter of record in this office).

   Smaller institutions process data manually.

5. To the best of my knowledge all institutions in the State of Tennessee have safeguards for curbing abuses by veterans and other eligible persons.

6. Institutions feel that the fee payable by the Veterans Administration for safeguarding against abuses should be increased.

Dr. William Shannon
Page 2
June 30, 1978

Tennessee

7. A reasonable change in the law concerning standards of progress - Congress should designate the State Approving Agency as the agency to co-operate directly with institutions in structuring and monitoring proper standards. The designation and task should include, but not be limited to: development of standards, monitoring of standards, revision of standards when indicated, and other overall efforts to guard against abuses.

Sincerely yours,

George R. Hunter

George R. Hunter, Director
Veterans Education

GRH:pb

cc Bob Purvis, Tennessee State Approving Agency
Lawrence Bartlett, Tennessee State Approving Agency
Gordon Guthrie, Florida State Approving Agency

Texas Education Agency

- STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
- STATE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION
- STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

201 East Eleventh Street
Austin, Texas
78701

June 30, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

I am writing this letter to you at the request of Dean Aschim, President of the National Association of State Approving Agencies. Dean has asked that I comment as Director of the Texas State Approving Agency on several areas of concern involving accredited colleges and universities and their various policies and procedures.

Attached is a copy of a letter I recently wrote to Andrew Thornton with the Veterans Administration concerning standards of progress in approved accredited colleges and universities in Texas. A copy of the standards utilized by Texas schools is also enclosed. I believe you will find the materials to be self explanatory.

Our concern in this area is that we spent a great deal of staff time over the period of a year in 1975-76 working closely with college and university officials to develop standards of progress which would be acceptable to the schools, would not be disruptive to their traditional ways of measuring progress, but which would insure that veterans would not be allowed to attend school indefinitely while drawing benefits and while not making progress towards their educational objectives.

I believe that we were successful in that effort; however, these standards were never really tested because the requirements of Public Law 94-502 went into effect a very short time after the standards were adopted. Schools were required to implement newer, more elaborate, indeed rather baroque, measures for dealing with veterans progress. Now we are dealing with the effects of Public Law 95-202, and the attendant rules, regulations, and directives established by the Veterans Administration. Looming on the horizon is further consideration of this entire area by the Congress this fall or winter.

"An Equal Opportunity Employer"

Texas-2

The second issue which Dean has asked me to address is that of "Seat Time" in courses offered by colleges and universities which award credit in semester hours. We find generally in Texas that the number of hours of credit awarded does coincide with the number of standard class sessions per week. Indeed, in only one instance that I can remember did we find an exception. In that case, the institution was awarding fifteen quarter credits for a course load requiring attendance in class nine hours per week. It was our judgement that in that institution fifteen quarter credits equaled three-quarter time, and the institution was approved on that basis. There are other traditional exceptions to the rule, however, and a sweeping regulation such as the one adopted by the Veterans Administration does an injustice to students in some programs. For example, students in an applied music program may be awarded one or two hours of credit for a course in which they are required to perform certain pieces of music while meeting with the teacher on a one to one basis one-half hour per week. A review of college bulletins will show that this is a traditional practice; however, under the Veterans Administration rule such students would not be allowed the full credit-hour load when measuring their course load for payment of benefits.

Finally in the area of record keeping and abuses of the veterans program, I have elected to furnish you with materials from our files reflecting several cases where we found what we believed to be abuses. Our records will reflect the actions taken by this Agency to prevent the abuses from continuing. I believe these materials might be more useful to you than a discourse from me about general problems found in record keeping or abuses relating to the failure of the schools to monitor veterans progress.

It seems to me that in the last few years when the Veterans Administration discovered what it considered to be abuses of the GI Bill, broad, sweeping changes in legislation and regulations were passed and placed into effect without perhaps the time-consuming and tedious consideration of exactly what effect those sweeping laws and rules would have on institutions which participate in the veterans program.

I would urge that when consideration is given to modifying existing requirements, that the traditional kinds of policies and procedures found in accredited colleges and universities be carefully considered with an eye to how those existing policies might be modified such that the concerns of the Veterans Administration be adequately addressed, rather than imposing on schools new and untried policies which would appear to have the desired effect.

That is what we tried to do in Texas when we implemented our standards of progress. We tried to modify and strengthen existing procedures wherever possible while working closely with the academic community in developing the standards. The same is true of other rules and regulations which are passed in an effort to curb abuses perceived by the Veterans Administration without knowing the long range effects of the implementation of a particular rule.

If you need additional information from me, I will be more than glad to work with you in anyway that I can.

Very truly yours,

Janice Boyd, Director
Proprietary Schools and
Veterans Education

JB:jo
Enclosures

cc: Dean Aschim

STATE BOARD OF REGENTS
UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
807 East South Temple • Suite 204 • Salt Lake City, Utah 84102 • Telephone 801 533-5617
T. H. BELL
Commissioner and
Chief Executive Officer

July 18, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

Thank you for this opportunity to append our comments to those which you have already received. I sincerely regret that this is the first opportunity to forward my response. I have been away from the office for a variety of reasons and thus unable to be more timely.

I trust, however, that despite this tardiness, you might find the enclosed observations worthy of consideration. They are enumerated in the order which they were requested.

1. Standards of Progress

Without equivocation, both public and proprietary colleges and universities in Utah have protested the continuing encroachment upon the prerogatives that form the warp and woof of the academic community! The reoccurring issue raised more frequently than any other is that the Veterans Administration's implementing regulations (? -- and what publications are to be considered regulatory and what are nonregulatory is never made clear: everyone is expected to dutifully comply without question) extend FAR BEYOND the intent of Congress. The progress standards matter is only one segment of the problem.

Our institutions monitor the student-veteran's AGPA (2.0 is the minimum allowed), their matriculation status (two quarters only), their course work (can take only those leading toward the degree or certificate), their total hours (they must graduate within the number of hours required), and their major area of study. These

DONALD B. HOLBROOK
Salt Lake City, Chairman
CHARLES E. PETERSON
Provo, Vice-Chairman
PETER W. BILLINGS
Salt Lake City
[illegible] BUTTARS
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J. LYNN DOUGAN
Salt Lake City
KENDRICK N. HARWARD
Richfield
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MRS. MARY S. LUNT
Cedar City

NEAL A. MAXWELL
Salt Lake City
ROBERT [illegible]
Ogden
MRS. JEAN OVERFELT
Salt Lake City
LUKE G. PAPPAS
Price

REX C. PLOWMAN
Lewiston
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Kaysville
[illegible]
St. George
PAUL A. WATTERSON
Logan

require complex administrative techniques. One of our schools has suggested a simpler format: each program could be rated at a given number of full-time quarters, plus a certain average number for electives and necessary prerequisites. Anything over that amount would necessitate special permission from the SAA.

Appendix O may be commendable, yet it reflects a strong lack of trust in all higher education. It is essentially a mechanical means of determining a student's progress toward his educational goal without taking into account the necessary "human factor" involved in achieving success. There are sections, too, which appear unreasonable, e.g., unsatisfactory termination as a result of excessive hours because of a failure of 11 hours or more -- there are reasons why a veteran could incur hours above those required by a major; there needs to be some discretion granted to the institution's certifying officials in matters such as this. In many cases a student can repeat a course and have the old grade struck from the official record. The primary approach should be that of the institution's having a recognized system of review and dismissal and an aggressive adherence to this.

Generally, the schools believe that they should establish their own set of standards and after these are approved by the SAA and VA (as was done in 1976), operate within them. Such a process would substantially minimize needless dictation by Federal Law and Regulations.

2. Seat Time

For credit purpose, 12 hours are considered to be the minimum required for full-time; however, for tuition purposes, this may be less. A further factor for measuring full-time enrollment is whether a student is a graduate or an undergraduate. Broadly speaking, one hour of credit refers to one hour of class time; other measurements may be used for physical education, laboratory time, etc.

Our institutions subscribe to the notion that while there are classes which require attendance in the learning process, there are other equally affective ways in which to learn. The VA problem of method of payment should not interfere with the orderly process of program completion. Progress should not be measured on seat time but rather on the grade achieved for the term by the student.

3. Recordkeeping

The requirements are unilaterally considered to be an imposition, because these are overwhelming both as to time and cost. Even with computers, the manual manipulation of the information is exhaustive. Most schools utilize a computer to a lesser or greater degree. Printouts are received three or four times a term. One or two schools will be changing over to a video system before next fall. Most, in addition to the computer assistance, maintain a file and record card on each veteran who is eligible for benefits.

Computer recordkeeping systems are primarily designed for the institutions recordkeeping requirements. Using printouts or a CRT provides only enrollment information. That information is only valid if the student stays in school and attends classes. Any student who discontinues attending without making formal withdrawal avoids the detection for at least 30 days. By the time the instructor recognizes the unofficial withdrawal and forwards the information to the registrar more than two weeks have passed. The registrar then forwards the information to Veteran Affairs. Veteran Affairs then attempts to contact the veteran to check on mitigating circumstances, etc. I seriously doubt that any system can provide reliable information on the basis required by Veteran Affairs.

4. Safeguards

a. Examples of abuse concepts:
   1. Where students register for classes with the sole purpose of receiving benefits.
   2. Where students do not intentionally complete their program for other than legitimate justification.
   3. Where students feel that VA benefits are a right, not a privilege.

b. The extent of abuses in this state is by-and-large minimal. Our schools run tight ships. When unusual overpayments are found, these generally result from one or two individuals, not a large number. It is impossible to reduce the number of overpayments beyond a certain level. I believe our institutions are diligently doing their best to keep these to an absolute minimum! In some instances, the regulations may even deter them from being more accurate.

c. Examples of possible safeguards:
   1. Place greater responsibility on the veteran to comply with VA regulations.
   2. Possibly having a 'contract' arrangement with the veteran for each certification period would make the student better understand the seriousness of the problem.

3. Maintain a closer check of the student's records to insure that he, in fact, is maintaining a 2.0 AGPA.

5. Recommendations

a. It is sincerely believed that the VA is overstepping its bounds in its attempt to govern institutional operating and program practices. The institutions are under control of their governing boards, state departments of education and, to some degree, by regional and national accrediting commissions and bodies.

b. There has to be more latitude extended to the institution's certifying officials in making judgments concerning the enforcement of the VA regulations. They can use their compliance surveys to ensure that the certifying officials are doing their job, but monitoring the letter of the law is not appropriate when there are so many extenuating circumstances in individual cases.

c. Maintain the probity of education and yet decrease the volume of proscriptions imposed by the VA is the thrust. The schools would welcome a relief, and could do as they are mandated without causing an increase in 'questionable' practices of the past.

d. Many of the problems are attendant to 'traditional' versus 'nontraditional' forms of education. I would suggest that a task force be formed to study this controversial yet vital matter. So much seems to center around measurement and payment that the real viability of education and the student suffers because of overregulation!

I wish you well in this important project! Kindly advise should I be able to assist further. With kindest regards and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Sterling R. Provost

Sterling R. Provost, Ed.D.
Coordinator, Veterans Education

SRP:bg

STATE OF
WASHINGTON
Dixy Lee Ray
Governor

WASHINGTON STATE COMMISSION FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
Airdustrial Park, MS LS-10, Olympia, Washington 98504
[illegible]

June 30, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the study you are conducting for the Veterans Administration. We have given considerable thought to the questions you presented to Dean Aschim, President, National Association of State Approving Agencies. Here are the results.

We have felt from the beginning that the changes to VA regulations were too comprehensive and too detailed. The results of this minutiae is now surfacing in our State, and the evidence is not pleasing. Schools that serve (or wish to serve) veterans are incapable of being new and innovative for fear of injuring the veteran's rights to benefits.

Programs are being modified to remove from the veteran's choice those educational segments available to other students (independent study, work experience, etc.). Schools are becoming more concerned with the proliferation of regulations and the resultant administrative costs. Some are dropping their approval. Others are changing their programs so as to operate under more liberal regulations (change from certificate to degree enrollments).

Progress is measured by our public and private schools according to standards identified by the schools. We have made a concerted effort to review progress standards in the schools, and we have found that a truly failing student has been withdrawn from training. Although some students have taken longer than others to reach their objective, the school records indicate that the majority of those permitted to continue in training have been successful. Some successful students, however, needed more time than the 10% factor. The point here is, however, that the school was aware of the student and the school made a judgment on continued pursuit.

We feel that Appendix "M" and "O" have been confusing to the schools. The regulations have usurped what the school had in place and has complicated the administrative process. Often the details of any particular regulation are ignored until non-compliance is noted in a VA survey or one of our supervisory visits. Many of the schools do not have the clerical capability to keep abreast of the minute details of regulations, and many of them feel that it is a waste of their time.

Schools with certificate programs measure full-time students on the basis of the number of hours of training needed for competency divided by the number of hours per day that is educationally sound. Credit-hour determinations are based upon an analysis of effort in relation to the traditional concepts of college credit. "Seat-time" is a non-sequitur as defined and used in VA regulations. Most of the public institutions in our State use 10-quarter credit hours as full-time--not the 12 hours in the regulations.

Washington-2

The areas of concern in reference to recordkeeping are two: (1) the additional time schedules (such as for the Occupational Graduate Employment Report) that are not compatible with the current schedule of the school, and (2) the amount of record searching the VA requires; such as for determining the unsatisfactory student, computing 85-15 rule, etc.

Our concept of the abuses currently happening is that they are minimal. A review of our supervisory visits and the VA compliance survey indicates that exceptions are a result of administrative/clerical error rather than improper guidelines and policies. It seems evident that exceptions have occurred more from a lack of knowledge than from willful neglect on the part of schools.

Generally, the schools have tried to comply with the myriad of VA regulations. Where an exception has been noted, most of the schools have taken some action to prevent recurrence.

We believe that the laws and regulations should emphasize administrative practices and place less emphasis upon the content and type of educational programs. Some form of general guidelines would be more successful. The regulations are so detailed now that they tend to conflict with one another, and it seems that additional regulations are created to try to explain the original regulations.

If the detailed regulations are to be continued perhaps the schools should send enrollments, grades, attendance forms, etc., to the VA. In this way, then, the VA could make a determination of benefits without the schools having to expend so much time and effort in guessing at the results.

Perhaps the veteran should have more individual responsibility in assuring his pursuit and satisfactory progress.

In substance, then, what we have said can be summarized into two points. First, take the monkey off the school's back and put more of it on the veteran student. Second, eliminate much of the specificity and definition in the regulations. Develop some general guidelines for schools to follow and respect the educational competence of these institutions.

A final note--The VA should involve more people from the SAA's in helping them (the VA) solve some of their problems. If school people are expert, then why not involve them in the problem-solving process. The expanse and complexity of the current regulations are a practical impossibility for many of the schools and may not have come into existence had adequate advice been sought.

Sincerely,

Harold S. Anderson

Harold S. Anderson, Director
Veterans Education and Training

HSA/kp

cc: Dean Aschim

West Virginia Board of Regents
Division of Veterans Education
950 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, WV 25301

Telephone 304/348-0111

July 5, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summitt Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

Mr. Gordon Guthrie, Regional Vice-President of our State Approving Agencies, asked that I answer the following questions and forward those answers to you. Since I am getting the questions third hand, I hope I have not misunderstood the questions.

1. How do your institutions generally measure progress?
   All of the IHL's measure progress by semester hours and quality points earned toward a degree.

2. What are your opinions of Appendix O (revised) of DVB circular 20-76-84?
   The circular offers a guideline to dismiss students who fail classes for those institutions which did not have one.

1. How do institutions measure full-time?
   Full-time in all undergraduate IHL is 12 quarter hours or 12 semester hours.

2. On what basis do institutions assign credit?
   Credit is usually assigned on the basis that 50 minutes of class time per week equals one (1) credit. Laboratory and technical subjects require greater periods of class time per credit.

3. What problems do the institutions have in keeping records?
   During the past year few problems have arisen. In our State, there has been generally a continuity in the offices that certify veterans, therefore officials have learned to anticipate and head off potential troubles. Recent compliance surveys have uncovered few serious difficulties.

4. Do institutions have computerized systems?
   All state institutions, and most accredited IHL's have computerized systems. The state schools all have a Digital Electronics PDP/11-40 which is used both as a multiplexing terminal for an IBM 360-75 and a

West Virginia

370/145 located at the host site of Morgantown, West Virginia, and a stand-alone computer. Some schools are developing very sophisticated on-line systems within their own capabilities. Other private schools have systems which seem adequate to their needs.

5. Do institutions have safeguards controlling veterans abuse?
All institutions are required to have monitoring systems which safeguard against most types of abuse. Frequent checks by my office and by VA indicate that these safeguards are working very well.

6. Do you have recommendations for changes in VA recording laws?
My suggestion would be that the VA deemphasize mechanical or structural requirements and look only at functional aspects of the reporting systems. The State Approved Agency system is supposed to guarantee quality education for veterans, but this is often disregarded in formulating regulations. On the whole, however, the system is apparently working quite well, at least in West Virginia, so my hope would be that no major changes be instituted.

I hope these answers will be helpful to you in your study. If I can be of further service, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely yours,

James T. Preston

James T. Preston
Coordinator Veterans Education

JTP/by

Antelope Valley College

Antelope Valley Joint Junior College District

3041 West Avenue K
Lancaster, California 93534
Telephone (805) 943-3241

June 12, 1978

Mr. Thomas M. Shay, Chancellor's Office
California Community and Junior College Association
2017 "O" Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Shay:

Two items in the categories in which you requested input are of a financial burden and staff overload nature.

1. Reporting fees: DVB Circular 20-77-97, 1-30-77, Public Law 95-202, Paragraph 2b4, reporting fees increased from $5.00 to $7.00. This fee is unrealistic, considering what must be done to earn it.

   a). The fee is only paid once a year.

   b). The fee is paid only for each Veteran certified, but is not paid for each certification (i.e. Fall, Spring and Summer).

   c). Some Veterans are reported to the Veterans Administration up to 5 and 6 times per semester; examples, unit load change, Grade Point Deficiency, Unsatisfactory Progress, Reasonable Progress Criteria, withdrawal, termination, and reinstatement as well as four year school evaluation request and approval.

   d). V. A. required reporting requires a full-time clerk typist to type and file the forms based on 700-1200 Veteran students. These reports are not required of non-veteran students. Good logic would dictate that V. A. should pay for what they require and receive.

   e). The $6000 reporting fee received for the past year will not cover the cost of one clerk typist. We feel the reporting fee should be paid at least each time a Veteran student is certified; this would more equitably cover the actual reporting cost.

June 12, 1978

2. Satisfactory Progress: DVB Circular 20-77-97, Appendix G, March 8, 1978.

   Even with some easing off of the strict V.A. requirements, many aspects of this rule are unnecessary and impractical. We must report a student as unsatisfactory progress (extension of approved length of course) if accumulated punitive grades total 13 units (more than a full-time load for one semester). This requires a constant record check of the students transcript which could cover numerous semesters in order to add all previous punitive grades received. This could result in "Unsatisfactory Progress Report" for a student with better than a 3.0 GPA. This V.A. required report is generated merely because the student will have to extend his required training time by an additional semester. A non-veteran student has no such requirement.

We cannot overemphasize the excessive V.A. requirements that are choking our schools and creating an overburden on our staff.

Very truly yours,

Francis M. Keenan
Vice President/Student Services

FMK/mh

broward community college

central campus
fort lauderdale, florida 33314

July 10, 1978

William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Bill:

This is the follow up I promised regarding my idea to consolidate federal assistance to educational institutions relative to the enrollment of veterans. Specifically, it is my suggestion that the Veterans Cost of Instruction program, the VA's Veterans Representative on Campus program, and the VA's reporting fee paid the institution to offset costs incurred in the certification process be combined.

I believe that consolidation, coupled with a commitment to the program through the life of Chapter 34 of the GI Bill would provide a "consistency of assistance" not now provided under VCIP and the VROC program. I believe that direct grants to institutions based on the number of veterans served (with allowances made for multi-campus schools) would benefit the government, the education community, and the veteran.

To refine the concept a little further; I propose that the three types of assistance now in existence be replaced with a program similar to VCIP. Since the program's design would eliminate the VROC and the reporting fee it appears the VA would be the logical choice to administer the program. Professionals and others employed under this program would not be VA employees and would have little direct contact with the agency. The VA, however, would take on a greater role relative to training institutional personnel.

It is the purpose of this change to provide professional

broward community college

central campus
fort lauderdale, florida 33314

assistance to veterans attending approved schools. Presently, services to veterans attending institutions with like numbers of veterans students can differ widely based on the number of VROC's in the particular region, the school's commitment to and support of the certification process. Awarding of monies based on headcount (with minimums and ceilings) would help remove some of the present inconsistencies and provide support and continuity to the program during its last years.

It is my contention that the consolidation concept can be dealt with in a report on Standards of Progress. Because of the significant increase in institutional monitoring responsibility in recent years and the ever increasing complexity of the entire "package" of VA benefits, it is clear that the need for an increase in both quality and quantity in terms of professional assistance is present. Monitoring Standards and counseling students cannot be accomplished by clerks whose primary focus is paper and not people.

I apologise for being so late with this letter. I thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Dobson

Thomas M. Dobson
Coordinator, Veterans Affairs

TMD:lam

Cabrillo College
[illegible] SOQUEL DRIVE
APTOS, CALIFORNIA
95003

June 12, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
c/o California Community and Junior College Association
2017 "O" Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Bill:

A previous commitment precludes my attendance at the June 15 meeting. Though I would welcome the opportunity to participate, I doubt that there is a great deal that I could add to what Gary Gallery has already extracted from our Veterans Affairs Advisory committee. However, the following is being written in the interest of providing you with direct input.

From the outset, Cabrillo College, an institution that has studiously endeavored to comply with the spirit of existing VA requirements, has resisted the imposition of additional regulations that encroach upon a college's autonomy. Now, in view of the passage of Proposition 13, we will be fortunate if we can maintain our previous level of effort, let alone incur the additional costs mandated by the various appendices. Be that as it may--pursuant to your study guide:

1. Standards of Progress

   A. Our budget, if there is one for the Office of Veterans Affairs (OVA), will not accommodate additional reporting requirements.

   B. The issue here seems to be that if we assume responsibility for documentation of an overpayment, it is tantamount to assuming responsibility for the overpayment itself. We have already encountered the VA's penchant for attempting to shift overpayment liability to the school by negatively utilizing the "good faith" efforts of the institution; we feel that it was wrong in the past, and nothing in our recent experience has occurred to alter that opinion.

   C. The VA's procedure regarding mitigating circumstances has proved to be unfair in the isolated incidences that we have observed.

2. Seat Time

A. This matter was broached with our OVA director and I feel his commitment is worth repeating:

> "Let's install buttons in all classroom chairs with direct tie-ins to Data Processing to document the hours of seat time. Each student would have on his/her chair a receptacle for the insertion of a plastic card that would identify who they were according to all the student classifications. Thus, the more they sat, the more money they would make! One problem--we can't afford it because of Jarvis.

His comment, though somewhat sarcastic, strikes at the heart of the issue. The VA still appears to be completely oblivious of the inner workings of a higher education institution.

B. Enrollment in 12-semester units is considered minimum full time at our institution. These units represent twelve hours of classroom instruction and/or an appropriate combination of lab and instruction.

C. Aside from the four state-imposed "census days" per year, the instructor is the sole judge of what is an appropriate attendance monitoring procedure in his or her class.

3. Record Keeping

A. Any requirements beyond what we have been doing would be beyond our capabilities.

B. Yes, we utilize a computer; however, we are in the early stages of its use and to develop the type of sophisticated programming required to even partially comply with the new dictates of the VA would be impossible at this juncture.

C. Yes, we feel that we have an excellent accounting system. It is based on the efforts of dedicated personnel and the College's commitment to a fair and responsible program administration.

4. Safeguards

A. The incidents of abuse at Cabrillo College are relatively few, but as has previously been stated, we have endeavored to work in "good faith" in upholding the intent of VA regulations. However, in the words of our OVA director:

> "People are the ones who provide computers with the information that eventually goes into reports. The reports are as reliable

as the people and people cost money. Because of Jarvis, the OVA faces a possible two-thirds reduction in staff."

(Incidentally, the county Veteran's service office, with whom we work very closely in our outreach program, may be reduced from over a dozen employees to one person).

5. Catalogs and Bulletins

A. The requirement for a public institution to "swear" that what is stated in its publications is true, is the height of audacity. I realize that there are probably numerous incidences where discrepancies exist between stated policy and actual practice, but in the end, the public institution is held accountable to what is written. Thus, it would appear that the sole purpose for the VA requirement is to prepare for court in the event that a legal action against the College is sought, and I submit that is hardly the basis for the establishment of a close-working relationship that relies upon mutual respect.

B. No, we do not have a unique procedure for keeping editors aware of federal regulations. As in the case of so many things that we do, try as we might, communications sometimes do break down.

6. Recommendations

A. Regulations: Modify the VA regulations to bring them in line with the wide range and diverse reporting capabilities established by educational institutions across the country.

B. Legislation: Eliminate the VA's encroachment upon college autonomy.

Permit Veterans' benefits to be administered in a fashion similar to the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program.

C. Veterans: The results of modifications in the legislature and/or regulations would, most definitely, be beneficial to veterans.

D. General: If the "tax revolt" sweeps the nation, there could be, conceivably, no local veterans' services, very little state services, and, nationally, a multitude of unemployed veterans. If those unemployed veterans choose to return to school, our ability to handle them would be reduced significantly in the face of the proliferation in VA regulations.

I have discussed the foregoing with our president who, incidentally, will not be able to attend the 15th either, and he concurs with the positions stated herein.

Good luck on your task and we certainly hope that positive results will be forthcoming.

Sincerely,

F. C. Carter
Dean of Special Services

FCC:mf
cc John Petersen
Gene Wright
Gary Gallery
David Warren

State of California CSUC System

California State Polytechnic University,
Pomona

Memorandum

Mr. William Shannon

Date : July 5, 1978

File No.:

From : Robert L. Losser, Registrar

Subject: Response to SA 78-47, Meeting June 13, 1978

1- California State Polytechnic University, Pomona is located 30 miles east of Los Angeles and 30 miles west of San Bernardino in the Pomona Valley. Only 1200 students live on campus, the rest are commuters. The approximate 800 acre campus borders the communities of San Dimas, Covina, West Covina, Walnut, Diamond Bar, La Verne and Claremont. Officially we are located in the City of Pomona. The enrollment at 3rd week census date last Fall quarter, 1977 was 14,100 students. 1200 veterans are enrolled in our programs. Our principal feeder community colleges are Mt. San Antonio College (which is adjacent to our campus) Citrus College and Chaffey College. 1/3 of the studentbody are female students and many of our students are older, mature adults seeking degrees part time and evenings.

The curriculum is unique because of our technical, practical approach and the fact we have Agriculture and Engineering programs. There are over 55 majors at the baccalaureate level and 12 master degree programs.

2- We have one clerk, fulltime handling the notification of unsatisfactory progress of Veteran students as well as administrating the other requirements of the VA. She often uses the services of a veteran student who works as a student assistant. Quite frankly she is not qualified to do an evaluation at the conclusion of each quarter for each veteran student which is what we perceive appendix "O" to require. Our Veteran Clerk is one of our most valuable employees and is classified as CA IIIA but is not an evaluator.

Appendix "O" as we perceive it has gone too far and in effect, if implemented will interfere with the academic process and the rights of the veteran students. We at Cal Poly have one of the more tangible methods of determining requirements for each major and yet it would be impossible for us to determine satisfactory progress for each veteran student. Each student actually has a written contract for fulfilling requirements. However, there are such things as approved and free electives which must be approved by each student's major department. There are also numerous petitions waiving and substituting certain requirements. In our system it is very difficult to determine if each course taken is or is not being used toward the students fulfillment of a degree objective unless an evaluation is performed and all petitions and memos from the appropriate faculty are available.

3- I think our present procedures are adequate for preventing fraud. I am satisfied there are little or no violations of satisfactory progress on our campus. If the legislation would be written requiring the educational institution to exercise judgement in reporting violations of quality and quantity of work taken toward the intended objective perhaps equity would be served better.

California State University
Dominguez Hills
University College
Carson, California 90747

Office of Admissions and Records

June 12, 1978

INFORMATION FOR JUNE 13 MEETING WITH WILLIAM SHANNON

Outlined below are the items of information requested in SA 78-47 for the June 13 meeting with Mr. Shannon:

1. In the Spring Quarter 1978, this campus had a total of 6588 students enrolled and an enrollment of 900 veteran students receiving benefits. The demographic data on total enrollment is shown on Attachment A. Note: The data is for the Winter Quarter 1978, but should not vary much from Spring Quarter 1978. The demographic data on veteran students receiving benefits is shown on Attachment B.

2.

A. Contact Hours

This campus has experienced a problem with certification of its External Degree Program in Humanities regarding contact hours. Since the courses involved do not meet in a standardized classroom situation, the V.A. has categorized the program as Independent Study and has required that the certifications for these students be tuition and fees only. This represents substantially less payment for the veteran student than if he/she were being certified on a standard basis. The campus has appealed the categorization unsuccessfully. Copies of correspondence with the V.A. on this subject are attached (Attachments C-E).

Provision for non-standard programs such as the External Degree in Humanities need to be made. While the courses do not meet contact hours requirements, they certainly are legitimate courses and need to be recognized as such. The veteran student is being financially penalized by a narrow interpretation by the Veterans Administration.

B. Standards of Progress

The concerns outlined in David Kagan's letter of April 11, 1978, addressed to Mr. Cleland of the V.A., are shared by this campus. The requirement of the V.A. to report veterans who have earned twelve or more cumulative units of F is not realistic nor reasonable. There are students, veterans and non-veterans, who earn twelve or more units of F over a period of time who are in good standing and who are satisfactorily progressing toward the degree. The V.A. should acknowledge the standards of progress of the CSUC and not attempt to intrude into educational policy.

3. Recommended changes in the legislation and/or regulations.

   A. Contact Hours

   Rather than relying on or basing certification on classroom attendance and contact hours, other factors should be considered. One suggestion made in the campus correspondence with the V.A. was to utilize the regional accrediting associations. If an institution and a program have been approved by the accrediting association, the program should be, or could be, approved by the V.A. for payment of standard benefits.

   B. Standards of Progress

   The V.A. should cease to intrude on educational policy of the institutions and should acknowledge that systems such as the CSUC have established adequate standards of progress. If institutions have such standards which are deemed by the V.A. to be appropriate, adequate, and educationally sound, the V.A. should not impose unreasonable, unworkable and impractical standards on the institution.

   If the V.A. wishes to impose these standards on institutions, the V.A. should provide staffing to screen the records to make determinations of unsatisfactory progress.

The responses and information above have been provided by Larry McClelland, Director of Records and Registration at the University.

LMC:tr

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, DOMINGUEZ HILLS
1000 East Victoria Street • Dominguez Hills, California 90747 • Area Code 213—Phone: 532-4300

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 10, 1977

Mr. R.K. Sorenson
Veterans Services Officer
Veterans Administration
Regional Office
Federal Building
11000 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA. 90024

Your Ref. No: 344/272A
dated Jan. 25, 1977

Dear Mr. Sorenson:

Your letter referred to above contains the statement that allowances to students enrolled in our Humanities External Degree program are strictly governed by Veterans Administration Regulation 14280 pertaining to independent study and that you are not questioning either the quality or quantity of the work required.

While we understand your concern about payment of allowances strictly within the terms of VA Regulation 14280, we ask you to consider again the implications of a literal interpretation of that regulation. Your insistence on providing full allowances only by using the Carnegie Contact Unit (one hour of class meeting per week for each unit of academic credit) clearly stems from a traditional view that once prevailed in the academic world. But in the academic world itself that view no longer holds universally. Recognized and accepted innovation in educational programs would never have been possible if the older concept still prevailed.

Our Humanities External Degree program is only one example of innovations which have taken place in academia nationwide in an effort to respond to student and societal need. There is a demonstrated need of students, including veterans, for access to higher education under delivery modes that do not require regular attendance in scheduled class sessions on campus. Because of changes in shifts on jobs, because of mobility from job to job (including change of residence), because of employment which involves constant travel, because of domestic responsibilities, physical health, and many other reasons there are bona fide needs for some programs in higher education which permit course work and the pursuit of degrees not tied to specific scheduling of courses at predetermined times on a college campus.

Our Humanities External Degree programs were developed specifically to serve the needs of a segment of the population including veterans, described above.

Dr. Donald R. Gerth, President
California State College, Dominguez Hills

Although veterans enrolled in our program do not attend regularly scheduled classes on campus, they do incur many expenses in independent study beyond tuition fees, including occasional visits to the campus to confer with a faculty mentor or teacher, telephone calls to the faculty, expenses of preparing audio cassettes which are frequently used as a means of contact with the faculty, travel to libraries--both the campus library or other campus or public libraries--costs of books and other study materials and supplies--all of which are concrete expenses above and beyond the tuition fees.

Moreover, in lieu of attending classes, Humanities External Degree students by and large spend more time than on-campus students in the preparation of/written assignments and in reading of assigned materials than do conventional students and are frequently obliged to forego the possibility of extending their hours of work at jobs which would otherwise permit additional income.

We recognize that administration of the program of veterans allowances would be more complex if your regulation addressed itself to the realities of an independent study program, in lieu of strict Carnegie Contact Unit accounting, but it is not fair to veterans, in our opinion, to demand strict adherence to a regulation because it is easier to administer, than to introduce a variable which accommodates legitimate independent study programs. Is it not a fact, moreover, that the whole program of veterans allowances was developed to meet the educational needs of veterans rather than to impede these educational needs by insistence on a single mode of instructional delivery?

We urge you to review your decision. Otherwise the reduction of allowances, which you presently insist on, will force some veterans (perhaps most) who cannot afford to continue under a reduced allowance to disenroll from the program and to abandon their plans to pursue a college degree.

Sincerely yours,

Donald R. Gerth
President

DRG/sc
cc: Dean Gemmell

California State University, Fullerton
Office of Admissions and Records

June 21, 1978

Mr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

It was a pleasure participating with you in the recent discussion about the problems relating to Veterans Administration policies concerning standards of progress and seat time. I hope you will be able to meet the challenge of the Congressional mandate to resolve the problems now existing in regard to these topics. Your comments during the June 13th meeting indicated to me that you have a good understanding of our (CSUC) situation as well as the legitimate concerns of Congress about the VA benefit program for qualified veterans. Good luck!

Let me first give you a brief description of our enrollment situation. In the Spring Semester 1978 our enrollment was 21,072 including 2,007 veterans certified to the VA. In the Spring term, 1977 our enrollment was 21,452 including 2,300 veterans. (The data I gave you after the discussion on June 13 was for Spring 1977. We are now at mid-point in determining grades, updating our records, etc., for Spring 1978 so I will use only Spring 1977 data in the following discussion although I am certain that our current term data would be comparable.)

We are a commuter campus; we have no residence halls. Our student body consists of 10,611 men and 10,095 women. The median age is 23. Minorities make up only 16.4% of our students. For Spring 1978 the units attempted by our students were as follows:

6 or less	32.7%
7-11	17.5%
12 or more	49.9%

Significantly, a recent study indicates that 60% of our students claim they work 21 hours or more each week; only 13% do not work. Our observation is that most of the veterans on campus work in one way or another. We are in a high cost of living area, as you may know.

We have a computer center on campus which supports our record keeping and administrative data needs in maintaining and updating student and veterans records and reports. We have no serious problems with the VA record maintenance requirements.

Registrar/714-870-3218/Fullerton, California 92634

Our veterans study program monitoring procedure is a sub-system of the Student Information Record System (SIRS). The VA certification office receives computer printouts of student (veteran) enrollments several times each semester. The change of status forms (1999b) are produced monthly each semester by the computer for all student veterans.

For purposes of determining a student's ability to remain in the University both quality of performance (GPA) and progress towards the educational objective is considered. This is true both for the non-veteran as well as the veteran.

Our campus monitors student progress by using the progress point system mandated on all of the CSUC campuses. The progress system awards the same number of progress points as grade points for the traditional letter grades except that a Credit grade (CR in our Credit/No Credit grade option) receives 2 progress points and a No Credit grade receives "0" points. Please refer to Appendix I for a display of the academic bookkeeping values in our grading system.

We believe our accounting system works well and provides acceptable reporting and monitoring devices to identify problem areas for more detailed scrutiny. I emphasize that this is true for non-veteran and veteran alike.

Each semester the University mails to all veterans certified to the VA a notice which defines our standards of progress and other important academic policies including study program changes, attendance, probation and disqualification. A copy of such a letter for early registration Fall Semester 1978 is attached as Appendix II.

You have heard our comments concerning "standards of progress" so I will only attempt to summarize our position.

1. As one of 19 institutions in the CSUC system we must adhere to existing policies concerning the full range of academic requirements. This includes monitoring reasonable progress on the part of all students toward stated degree or credential objectives. This monitoring is accomplished in accordance with appropriate academic policies on curriculum, grading, academic standards, probation and disqualification, among many others.

2. These policies, as administered on this campus, result in what we like to think is a generally high quality university education for all of our students. The faculty is deeply concerned about quality and standards, as is the administration. We believe most, if not all of our students want this quality maintained for their own self-interests; students who are veterans are no exception.

3. The "bottom line" is reflected in our academic status summary which, for the Spring term, 1977, indicated that 18,132 of our 21,452 students were in "good standing." On the other hand, 2,139 or 10% were on academic probation and 1181 or 5-1/2% were subject to disqualification (dismissal). Our system allowed the CSUF veterans certification office to identify 194 of the 1181 disqualified students as veterans certified to the VA. Of the 194 veterans there were 74 disqualified for lack of progress and 116 for purely academic reasons. Four (4) bombed out on both counts! All 1181 students were mailed disqualification notices, however, the 194 veterans were also mailed a

special notice concerning procedures to follow to meet special VA requirements for counseling prior to reinstatement in the University (see Appendix III for example of card insert mailed).

4. We believe this system and our procedures meet the spirit of the VA requirements if not all of the written regulations and interpretations. The system provides precise reports for review and audit to meet our academic standards as well as those of both the CSUC system and the VA. Why, then, must the issue be confused with more detailed instructions, guidance and interpretations which apply only to the student veteran?

It would appear that public and private colleges and universities which are nationally or regionally accredited should be exempted, on request to the VA, from narrowly defined standards of progress regulations more suitable to technical or vocational training schools so long as the system used by such institutions has been examined and found adequate. Such exemption need not be arbitrary but, rather, based on State Approving Agency review and approval as is now done with catalogs and bulletins. Also, it would not be unreasonable to require the CSUC Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees audit teams to make routine checks to be sure the institutions in the system are carrying out system-wide policies--including standards of progress.

Safeguards - No one can quarrel with the need for controls or audits of how public money is disbursed. Nevertheless, experience at California State University, Fullerton indicates the extent of abuse by veterans here is very limited. We attribute this to monitoring procedures which identify academic problem cases - both veteran and non-veteran - while still allowing for appeal and reinstatement based on mitigating circumstances. In this regard, we should not lose sight of the fact that student veterans should have the "right to fail," too, meaning that the standards should apply equally to both types of students--veteran and non-veteran. I believe our academic status summary reflects the range of academic success or lack of success among our students and is probably typical of most universities.

Abuses can be curbed or minimized by continuing the compliance audits by the regional VA offices. Also by requesting State Approving Agency and system offices (i.e., Chancellor's Office and the Board of Trustees' Audit Offices in the CSUC system) review campus veteran certification procedures and system standards of progress compliance to insure that the University administration is complying with policies as previously reviewed and supposedly approved by the SAA.

Seat Time - This area of concern has not been a problem with us, thank the Lord, and we hope it never will be! We are satisfied with the current definition of "full time" for computing benefits. In summary it is as follows:

MEASURED TRAINING TIME AND BENEFITS

Undergraduates and Graduates (without 500 level classes)

Full-time	12 - units
3/4 - time	9 - 11
1/2 - time	6 - 8

Graduates (with 500 level classes)

Full-time	9 units	-	6-500 level
3/4 -time	6 units	-	6-500 level
1/2 -time	3 units	-	3-500 level

For less than 1/2 time, the pay scale is the cost of material and service fees only.

Catalogs and Bulletins - We have no particular problem with the current arrangement which requires SAA review and approval. We do not have a procedure for keeping editors aware of applicable Federal regulations and we welcome the information you offered that a guide would soon be available. Could you send me a copy, please?

Recommendations -

a. Regulations: There is a need for changes in the VA policies and procedures. As indicated above, allow established colleges and universities "to mind their own stores" subject to review and audits by the VA, SAA and, if applicable, system headquarters auditors. The standards or criteria for such audits should be general enough to allow institutions of higher education to perform their societal functions without burdensome overview and regulation by a federal bureaucracy. This, of course, is only if the university is doing the job reasonably well! The accountability line concerning policy compliance should be from the VA to the SAA to the system headquarters office to the institution.

   Greater emphasis should be placed on the individual veteran's responsibility in regard to the proper use of VA benefits and less on making the institution a policeman for the VA. This is a difficult point, we know.

   Finally, regulations need to be written so that they can be understood. Most of those I have read make mine eyes glaze over with warm aspic. New terms, definitions and requirements alien to the educational community should be avoided wherever possible. Regulations should be written to address the problems and circumstances anticipated in the various categories or types of institutions. For example, the four-year college or university has a different set of circumstances than the technical or trade school. The community college which offers both liberal arts and technical courses has different problems than either the university or the trade school. Why not ask representatives from each category to assist in preparing appropriate regulations?

   One further thought--ask HEW Secretary Califano to help Mr. Cleeland and the VA using HEW's "Operation Common Sense" experiences.

b. Legislation: Try to clarify the question raised during our discussion, i.e., are VA educational benefits an entitlement or are they something else? If they are "something else" then that should be made clear in public announcement concerning such benefits.

c. General Blue Sky: We would like to see a better system of check delivery to the individual student. Several years ago we offered a suggestion which was gleaned from Navy Department experience in pay check disbursement. Such a system would involve the veteran with his/her local bank and would serve several purposes including more timely delivery of the monthly VA check. I am enclosing a copy of our correspondence to Mr. Johnson. It was turned down, of course, but I still think it has some merit. Think about it. Perhaps it has some implications for all Federal financial aid programs to students.

Conclusion

If you have read this far, I hope you have not learned more about CSUF than you cared to know. In any event, I hope what is in this letter will assist you in your effort. If we can be of assistance or provide more information, please call me (714) 870-3218.

Best wishes.

Cordially,

J B Sweeney

J. B. Sweeney
Registrar

JBS:fn

Appendices

State of California

Memorandum

To : Alex Sherrifs, Vice Chancellor
Academic Affairs
Susan Hunter, Assistant Dean
Student Affairs

Date : June 12, 1978

File No.:

From : CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH: Frank Noffke, Counselor; Director,
Veterans Affairs Program
Rowland Fisher, Coordinator,
Veterans Affairs Office
Leonard Kreutner, Director
Admissions and Registration

Subject:

President Horn has asked us to respond to your memorandum of May 31, 1978, Code SA-78-47. We submit the following:

1. The brief description of the campus situation.
2. The impact of, and objections to, the VA regulations, and
3. Our recommendations for changes.

We followed first the discussion guide and then checked over Appendices "D" and "G" submitted with Code SA-78-45.

1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION

CSULB has an enrollment of 31,336 students and a veteran enrollment of 3,800 totally, with 2,332 benefit-drawing veterans who must be services through University and VA procedures.

All students' records are the responsibility of and are controlled by the Director of Admissions/Registrar.

2. IMPACT AND OBJECTIONS/COUPLED WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

To comply with the VA regulations, it would mean asking for a waiver of Appendix Q by using Appendix G, which in essence says that the institution is in compliance with Appendix Q.

It is all but impossible for CSULB to comply with the requirement that a "Graduation Check" be completed on each veteran each semester.

Problems:
1. Man hours unavailable under current rates of reporting fee.
2. Access to transcripts on 2,500 veterans is a major problem.
3. Use of VA work studies to complete work would cause errors and could violate Privacy Act.

In general, the problem with VA regulations is that the attempt is made to write regulations which cover equally well institutions of higher learning as diverse as 2-year trade schools, on the one hand, and universities, on the other, including graduate programs.

Standards of Progress: Sec. 1674 and 1724 of U.S. Code 38

Objection:

1. University does not have a policy which establishes satisfactory progress in terms of length of time. Unsatisfactory progress is determined by academic grade point progress only.

2. This policy is inviting fraud, in that the veteran may be enrolling for classes which do not apply to the veteran's major course of study.

Recommendation:

1. That Satisfactory Progress be measured only in terms of academic progress.

Section 1780 (a) (4) of U.S. Code 38

(no objection)

Appendix O/paragraph 9

Objection:

Policy is too general, particularly with regard to the endless list of mitigating circumstances.

Recommendation:

Specific guideline of mitigating circumstances be provided by the VA.

Seat Time:

Objection:

Because of various scheduling policies, the number of class meetings is not a realistic measurement of full-time attendance. e.g.: a 3-unit course may have 3 sessions per week at 1 hour per session, 2 sessions per week at 1½ hours per session, or 1 session per week for 3 hours.

Recommendation:

That seat time be measured in terms of class hours per week, not number of class meetings per week.

Definition of "Full Time"

"Full time" is 12 semester units per semester

Recorded class time

Attendance is not kept at CSULB.

Objection:

Since there is no attendance policy at CSULB, daily attendance is not maintained by the instructor.

Recommendation:

That seat time be measured by completed course work, as required by the instructor.

Credit Assignment:

Credit is assigned on the basis of the instructor certifying the completion of all course work by posting of grades.

Record Keeping

The keeping of additional records requested by the VA is too costly in man hours.

Universities are not designed to track/monitor students throughout the semester.

Record keeping functions are formulated for easy registration, certification, and verification of completed units. When rules are changed in midstream, errors are caused.

We do report drops and changes in status during the semester, but cannot monitor attendance throughout the semester.

Use of Computers

We do use computers in all areas of record keeping except attendance.

Our system is available for examination by other institutions if desired.

Safeguards

Extent of Abuse

Fraud in institutions of higher learning is minimal. Approved, fully accredited institutions should be treated separately in VA regulations.

CSULB's compliance survey record shows a high level of compliance with all VA regulations which give a reasonable, practical opportunity for compliance.

Safeguards

Abuse of Veterans Benefits

Recommendation

Develop a meaningful set of regulations which veterans can understand and the reporting institution can implement, for example,

(1) Use the institution's definition of Satisfactory Progress to monitor a veteran's use of benefits.

(2) Use the university registrar in determining when academic disqualification occurs.

The "12 units of punitive grade rule" is not realistic for several reasons:

1. A student may have 12 units of punitive grades and at the same time have an overall satisfactory g.p.a. The University would rule that the student is making satisfactory progress.

For example, the punitive rule doesn't take into account the fact that the student could take 18 units, complete 15 units satisfactorily, and accumulate 3 punitive units each semester!

2. CSULB has a policy whereby a student may repeat a course in which he received a punitive grade, and have that punitive grade discounted from his g.p.a. upon successful repeating of the course.

Re: Prevention of Abuse:

Make institutions liable for abuses in veterans benefits when proven that there is willful intent to commit fraud.

Catalog and Bulletins

Section 504 (1) of PL 94-502

No objections.

We do keep editors aware of changes. The catalog is updated yearly.

Recommendations:

A. There is a need for changes in VA Policy and regulations

(1) e.g., our recommendations for a Grass-Roots Workshop

See Append.A

(2) Definitive rules and regulations to cover separately:

(a) Universities and colleges, and (b) Trade schools.

The changes recommended will affect the institution and the veteran, will curb abuses, and help institutions comply in a realistic manner with current VA Policies.

Veterans Benefits

B. Yes, there is a need for changes in Veterans Benefits

VA regulations seem often to not carry out the intent of Congress (the law), which is to enable a veteran to further or complete his education, and to become a more productive member of society. The VA often throws unnecessary obstacles in the way in the form of over-regulation and interfering with the university's conduct of its educational programs. The effect of the changes will be to allow the university to do what it knows best, and allow the veteran to achieve his career goals.

C. Yes, the changes will be beneficial to the veteran.

D. Yes, our recommendations are given above.

It shouldn't take numberous Appendices (e.g., A through O, etc.) to explain or implement the law.

IN SUMMARY, we comply with specifics (elements) of DVB Circular 20-77-97 Appendix G -- but we disagree in principle, philosophy, and policy and practicality regarding:

(1) the "12-unit punitive grade rule" and

(2) the length-of-course basis for determining satisfactory progress, i.e., time scale instead of academic standing.

FN:ch

cc: Stephen Horn, President
John Shainline, Vice President for Student Affairs

Appendix: Grass-Roots Workshop

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH
Veterans Affairs Office
(213) 498-5437

February 22, 1978

Dr. George Arnstein
Director, Educational Policy Division
Veterans Administration
Washington, D.C.

Dear George,

In a brief visit with Guy McMichaels at the recent NAVPA Conference, I spoke to him about his and my past discussion of the proposal I had made to him, entitled "The Grass-roots Workshop", etc., etc.

He indicated that you would be the person with whom to discuss this needed program.

I attempted to see you following the session at which you spoke and found that it ran so long, it was impossible to make connections. Therefore, I am using this means of introducing the subject to you, and forwarding you the attached copy. I would appreciate your reviewing it and letting me hear.

It was apparent at the Conference that communication between top policy setters and the field offices, at institutions of higher learning, is essential if the time consumed, misunderstandings, and wasted efforts are to be corrected. We know our government is "big government" and that the problems of communication are inherent. Therefore, it requires renewed efforts and firm resolve to make the big jump from top policy setters to persons in the field. Contact with agency chiefs who in turn are in contact with officers of associations, does not get to the heart of problems of implementing educational programs for veterans.

This proposal attempts to correct in rather direct and low-cost fashion, that problem. I urge your support of this plan.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Noffke

Frank Noffke, Counselor;
Director, Veterans Affairs Program

FN:cc
Encl.
cc: Senator Cranston
J.W. Shainline, V.P., Student Affairs
John Mallan, AASCU
Rowland Fisher, VAO Coordinator
Jack Miller, Dir., LAVARO
Marv Peterson, Pres., NAVPA
Neil McArthur, Chief, VPB, O. of E.
Bob Jones
Roy Williams

ONG BEACH CALIFORNIA 90840
HE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH
VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE

February 23, 1977

Mr. Guy McMichaels
General Counsel
Veterans Administration
Vermont at H Street
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Guy:

Here is the Proposal we discussed in your office, preceded by the NAVPA Forum meeting on the previous day where the idea generated.

I believe this plan has great merit as I believe it will show.

Jack Wickes and Babette Pelzer liked the idea and wanted to take it to Senator Cranston.

Let me hear--perhaps a phone call to consider modifications and whatever push it takes next. I know millions can be saved.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Noffke

Frank Noffke, Counselor
Director, Veterans Affairs Program

FN:ch

cc: Alan Cranston, Senator, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
Stephen Horn, President, CSULB
Jonn Mallan, Director, Governmental Relations, AASC&U
Tom Wanasek, President, NAVPA
John Shainline, Vice President for Student Affairs, CSULB
Jack Wickes, Associate General Counsel, Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
Jim Souther, member, NAVPA Board
Babette Polzer, aide to Senator Cranston

PROPOSAL FOR A "GRASS ROOTS" WORKSHOP TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTING VETERANS ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES AS THEY AFFECT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

Submitted by:

Frank Noffke, Counselor
Director, Veterans Affairs Program
California State University, Long Beach

John W. Shainline
Vice President for Student Affairs
CSULB

Rowland Fisher
Coordinator, Veterans Affairs Office
CSULB

PROPOSAL FOR A "GRASS ROOTS" WORKSHOP TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OF IMPLEMENTING VETERANS ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES AS THEY AFFECT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

I. INTRODUCTION

The target of this proposal is to reduce or eliminate overall waste of time, energy and money in developing implementing procedures that create great difficulty within college admissions, registrars, and veterans affairs offices, as well as V.A. departments.

Only those personnel who are immediately involved in meeting the requirements within the offices named above have the contacts with the massive paperwork required to meet V.A. regulations in the following instances:

A. Standards of Progress

B. Appendix H -- The 85-15 rule

C. Appendix O -- Unsatisfactory Progress

Before going any further, it should be understood that the purpose of this proposal and its resultant workshop is not to place the blame at any place; but rather to bring together to solution those persons, functions, and procedures which will be workable at the institution, and satisfy the responsibility which the Veterans Administration has in implementing the requirements and mandates of the law as enacted by Congress.

All of the above relate primarily to overpayment liabilities and the new peacetime G.I. Bill. Concurrently, deep appreciation is expressed to those who worked to make possible the unprecedented peacetime G.I. Bill.

II. THE PLAN: In General

A. Phase One

The plan is to bring together in Washington, D.C., in a working situation, the grass roots personnel, from a selected, representative, number of institutions of higher learning to work to the point of agreement on modifications of policy and procedures. This work would take place prior to modifications of the law and V.A. regulations, and discussions at the top levels, in order that a workable, manageable total process can be evolved and tested. The specific purpose is, of course, to save time and processing in what has become wasted rhubarbs, disagreements, negotiations, memorandums, and worthless discussions and arguments that have taken place from top levels down to the lower levels; where, for example, an individual V.A. employee and an individual Veterans Affairs or institutional employee are needlessly arguing, oftentimes over a point which has been revised or which was in error or infeasible.

B. "Grass Roots" Personnel

The grass roots personnel would be:

1. The Veterans Affairs Office Coordinator
2. The Registrar
3. The computer/records specialist on the given campus
4. V.A. and Vet-Rep implementers (Central Office and Regional V.A. offices of the participating institutions)
5. Office of Education staff
6. House and Senate Veterans Affairs Committee staff
7. Associations of Institutions of Higher Learning, e.g., American Council on Education, American Association of Junior and Community Colleges, American Association of State Universities

C. Objectives

The object of these discussions would be to:

1. Review the difficulties as alleged by the institutions
2. Revise entirely new, hopefully simplified and streamlined systems for accomplishing the goal of satisfying the spirit and intent of the law
3. Modify existing regulations
4. Establish a process for resolution of future requirements and regulations prior to their being discussed at higher levels and prior to implementation.
5. Of top concern is that the group would not leave its working place, preferably Washington, D.C., possibly more centrally located, until it had achieved a draft to which all parties could agree.

D. Phase Two

The second phase would be to test these policy and procedure modifications in the regions with workshop groups of the same general constituency. Their review, agreement, modifications, and recommendations would then be turned over to the initial group in Washington, D.C.

E. Phase Three

Phase three would be the meeting of the original group with input from the regions, and once again meet until a workable solution is achieved, and all could agree.

III. TYPES OF INSTITUTIONS:

A. Phase One

One small private, eastern institution, one large public institution; the same for the midwest; the same for the west. At least two of the four would be community colleges. Hopefully the institutions would be selected on the basis of those locations where problems, and interest in resolving them, have been indicated. Suggested are the following institutions:

Boston University
Cal State University, Long Beach

Remaining four institutions to be selected by telephone conversations among NAVPA President, Proposal initiator, and V.A. representative, Central Office.

B. Phase Two

Selection of institutions in the regions would be made with the collaboration of the V.A. Regional Director and NAVPA Regional representatives. A workshop of the necessary number of days would be established to review the policy and procedure modifications of the Phase One group.

C. Phase Three

The original group would meet again in Washington, D.C.

IV. BUDGET ESTIMATE

A. Phase One

Policy Modification Group in Washington, D.C.

Six institutions, two each from East, Mid-west and West
Three staff from each (VAO Coordinator, Registrar, Computer/Records Specialist)

Travel:

West: 3 persons x 2 inst. & V.A.= 9 persons @ $450. round trip =	$4,050.
Mid-west: 9 persons @ $200. =	1,800.
East: 9 persons @ $200. =	1,800.
Local personnel: cab/parking 6 agencies x 2 - 12 @ $10 x 10 days =	1,200.

Per Diem:

27 persons @ $50 / day x 10 days =	13,500
Local personnel e.g., evening meals	1,000

Consultants (for discussion)	
Contingency	$5,000.
TOTAL	$28,350.
B. Phase Two. Regional Review	
Expenses borne by those in the Region	$ 00
Contingency	5,000.
TOTAL	$5,000.
C. Phase Three	
Conclusion by Policy Modification Group in Washington, D.C. Same as Phase One	$28,350.
Meeting Room Rental 10 days @ $100 per day	1,000.
Secretarial Staff	
2 for 10 days of meeting 2 for 5 days of report consolidation = 30 person-days @ $46 per day	1,380.
D. TOTAL	$64,080.

V. SOURCE OF FUNDS

A. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee

B. House Veterans Affairs Committee

C. Institutional Associations of Higher Education

D. A combination or sharing by the above

E. A governmental appropriation

F. The Office of Management and the Budget

G. Place the burden of expense upon the selected participants for Regional Workshops

VI. IMPLEMENTATION NEEDS

A. A neutral, sponsoring agency with "clout," e.g., Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, or a triad of V.A. Administrator, American Council on Education President, and NAVPA President

B. A strong, skillful, impartial chairman--Workshop Director

C. A carefully selected meeting area

D. Funds. See IV and V

VII. BENEFITS AND VALUES FROM THE PROGRAM

A. With the threat of institutional liability because of overpayments, and the lack of funds at institutions to increase their staffing and processing, it would seem the time has come to develop this workshop process, and devise ways and means which reduce or eliminate massive problems.

B. A far more workable solution would, for the cost of the few thousands for the workshop, save millions, literally, in preventing overpayment liabilities and the eventual loss of a substantial portion of that money because it would be non-collectible.

C. Take into consideration also, the time and energy lost in debating and combating in adversary roles, regulations which institutions cannot perform and cannot afford to perform.

D. Efficiency and the best use of taxpayers money is, of course the obligation we all have. Therefore, another benefit would be to provide congressmen (and committees) who initiate bills with immediately workable solutions with the assurance that it had been tested in the real life situation. Review by top level policy makers and administrators very often, frankly, does not get the direct testing and refinement which comes from the individuals who must work at the hands-on level. While there are advisory boards, (although I do not know of their precise existence for this purpose), the flavor of an educational advisory committee or council is not the same as the specific purpose of a workshop and --"stay there until you get it resolved." The flavor, intent, objectives, feasibility, are entirely different. It can work because it has.

E. The keynote for what we expect (and will accomplish) would be that of cutting through the protocol of advisory work by high level persons who represent institutions and agencies, but who are not, and could not be, conversant with the latest problems down at the shop, at the desk, at the computer, at the registration window, in the veterans affairs office, at the VEt-Rep's desk, in the Veterans Administration departments.

F. The millions that could be saved could very well fund programs which could give greater service to veterans, and like many pioneering projects, spin-off from benefits from this process would apply to many other areas of relationships among Congress, the lawmakers, the Veterans Administration, and other agencies, the implementers, the institutions, the recipients and the compliers, the students, veterans and consumers, the benefactors of this great and complex process.

Submitted by:

Frank Hoffke, Counselor
Director, Veterans Affairs Program
California State University, Long Beach

John W. Shainline
Vice President for Student Affairs
California State University, Long Beach

Rowland Fisher
Coordinator, Veterans Affairs Office
California State University, Long Beach

FN:JWS:RF:ch

3/3/77

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
6000 J STREET, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95819

DATE: June 12, 1978

TO: William Shannon
National Education Consultant

FROM: Tom Edwards, Registrar Tom Edwards
California State University, Sacramento

California State University, Sacramento has an enrollment of 20,000 students. Nearly 2,700 of our enrollment receive some means of Veteran Administration support. Our student body is about 50% male and 50% female, with a mean age of 26. Only 1,200 of our students live on campus, with the rest commuting from as far away as 50 miles. Our students are very transitory, with nearly half of them leaving school each year.

The impact of implementing PS 94-502 (Appendix G) at CSUS could be devastating to our veteran population. A study of veterans receiving punitive grades in Fall 1977 revealed that one-third of 2700 veterans received at least one punitive grade, thus requiring the University to ascertain whether any of these veterans had received 13 units of unsatisfactory grades in previous semesters. While no check was made, an educated guess would be that 500 veterans would have had their benefits terminated for unsatisfactory progress. The University normally disqualifies 175-225 veterans each semester. As I'm sure you're aware, once a veteran is terminated, it takes at least three months to receive V.A. counseling and then another two months to receive a V.A. check. With the V.A. counseling load at least tripling, veterans will be without money for six to eight months. This seems unjustified when they may be making "V. A. approved" normal progress according to the policies of the University.

Under present budgeting allocations, CSUS could not abide with provisions in PL 94-502. In 1977, CSUS received $7 for each veteran. While this amounted to over $18,000, salaries for our Certifying Official and her assistant amounted to over $16,500. Student assistant help and other operating expenses brought our expenditures to over $25,000. Our current system, which is partially computerized, allows for a purge every 30 days to ascertain whether a veteran has dropped units or withdrawn from the University. At this time, there is no possible way to add an additional step to check 800-900 veterans for 13 or more units of punitive grades.

There is one final concern that I would like to mention, V.A. regulations pay veterans according to the number of units they carry (i.e. less than one-half, one-half, three-quarter, and full time). In our case, 12 units is considered full time. If a veteran carries 12 units and receives punitive grade(s), then I believe he/she has not met satisfactory progress. However, where a veteran is carrying more than 12 units, receives punitive grade(s), but still passes 12 units, it seems to me that he/she has made

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES

satisfactory progress.

A reasonable alternative for CSUS will be to supply the V.A. with veterans' transcripts and let the V.A. determine whether the veteran is making satisfactory progress. For CSUS to monitor and report when a veteran reaches 13 units of punitive grades would require an additional half-time clerk or about three dollars per veteran. In view of the fact that CSUS has a punitive grading system with very strict standards of progress, we recommend that Congress exempt our University from PL 94-502 and allow us to apply our own policies and regulations.

TE/pw

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE
SAN BERNARDINO

OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS AND RECORDS

(714) 887-7301

IMPACT OF APPENDIX O

As requested, the following information concerning the impact of DVB Circular 20-76-84, Appendix O (Unsatisfactory Progress Public Law 94-502) at California State College, San Bernardino is hereby submitted for your consideration.

Compliance with these VA regulations would require the implementation of a records monitoring system and the addition of at least one college employee.

The academic standards of this college have been reviewed and approved by the Office of Private Postsecondary Education and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. It is our view that the VA should take responsibility for the enforcement of any additional standards of progress it wishes to impose upon students in receipt of educational benefits.

Current enrollment statistics can be found on the enclosed table.

Jo Ann Von Wald
Registrar

5500 STATE COLLEGE PARKWAY, SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA 92407 • TELEPHONE (714) 887-7201

DEMOGRAPHICS - SPRING TERM 1978

	All Students	All Veterans	Percentage	Veterans Receiving Benefits	Percentage
Undergraduate Enrollment	2809	601	21	476	17
Graduate Enrollment	1356	300	22	207	15
Total	4165	901	22	683	16

CALIFORNIA STATE COLLEGE, STANISLAUS

800 Monte Vista Avenue, Turlock, California 95380

June 15, 1978

Mr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

I would like to express once again my appreciation for the opportunity to offer my comments on a wide range of matters having to do with VA educational benefits at our recent meeting in Long Beach. I thought the meeting was very productive and was very encouraged by your receptivety to suggestions and your obvious concern for veterans.

As you requested, I am sending a copy of a counseling proposal I submitted to the Veterans Administration in January. So far I have not received a single word of feedback from the Veterans Administration. I am very concerned with the plight of the educationally disadvantaged veterans, and I think that the present system of VA counseling has a severe adverse effect on them.

Thank you again for your concern.

Sincerely,

Michael R Leaveck
Michael R. Leaveck
Coordinator for Veterans Affairs

MRL/nal

Enclosure

206

CHABOT COLLEGE
SOUTH COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
25555 HESPERIAN BOULEVARD HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA 94545
415 — 782-3000

Office of Special Student Services

POSITION STATEMENTS
on
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

With reference to the discussion guide submitted for the meeting with Dr. William Shannon, Representative of the Veterans Administration, the following comments present the position of Chabot College.

BASIC PREMISES

1. Chabot College recognizes and appreciated the contributions which veterans have made to the welfare of our society. It further recognizes and appreciates the personal dedications and sacrafice which many veterans have made.

2. Chabot College believes that veterans, through the opportunities of post secondary education, can achieve for themselves and their families, a richer and more effective life.

3. Chabot College recognizes and appreciates that veterans can achieve educational benefits through the Veterans Administration which enable them both to establish educational objectives for post secondary education and to achieve those objectives.

4. Chabot College dedicates itself to fulfulling the tenents of its stated philosophy and objectives (copy attached) for veterans - and all students who come to it.

5. Chabot College accepts full responsibility for providing educational programs and services for veterans and for providing records of progress for the veteran/student which can be shared with the V.A.

6. Chabot College believes that the Veterans Administration should accept full responsibility for providing the educational benefits which enable veterans to pursue the educational programs of the college.

7. Chabot College believes that when the Veterans Administration or any other agency requires another institution, such as a college, to become its agent and in doing so, imposes demands, restrictions, rules and regulations, costs and interuptions, it is wrong.

8. Chabot College believes that the Veterans Administration rules and regulations often place requirements on the college which, in effect, make it its agent.

9. Chabot College believes that when a veteran makes application for VA Benefits and the VA approves the application, a contract between the VA and the veteran is established and the veteran assumes full responsibility for meeting the requirements for qualification for continued benefits.

10. Both the college and the VA should hold affirmative action standards which do not creat barriers and requirements that discriminate against veterans.

With reference to the basic premises above, Chabot College takes the following positions regarding the matters presented by the Veterans Administration.

1. STANDARDS OF PROGRESS:

   a. Views on the Policy
   The requirement that insitutions monitor the veteran/students' progress toward completion of an approved program in a matter relating to the qualification of the veteran/student for VA benefits. It is therefore a responsibility of the VA. To impose it upon the college is a violation of premises stated above.

   b. Recommended Changes
   Chabot College recommends that the Veterans Administration, through its representation on campus, perform the procedures it requires for monitoring the progress of veteran/students.

   c. How Do We Measure Progress?
   Chabot College currently measures progress by a grade point average. Credit is given for grades of A, B, C, D, K, and S. This is different from the VA standards.

   d. Views on Section 1780 (a) (4) of 38 U.S.C.
   Limiting the provisions to credit toward "graduation" is not realistic in a community college where the educational objectives also include transfer to a 4-year college or a Certificate in a technical or vocational field. The wording should be clarified.

   The matter of whether or not the VA pays a veteran/student for a course not within the student's objective or for a course from which the student withdrew is a matter relating to premise 9 above.

   Chabot College's position is that the determination of eligibility for payment is a responsibility of the V.A.

e. Views on Mitigating Circumstances
The college believes that students may often have mitigating circumstances relating to lack of progress, and an appeal procedure is a matter of due process. We suggest, however, that "mitigating circumstances" be defined and the nature of acceptable evidence by set forth.

2. SEAT TIME

a. The VA's policies and procedures are limited by traditional definitions. Colleges are moving to new forms for delivering instruction. These include the use of televised classes, independent study courses, commuter classes, etc. The "seat time" regulations precludes veterans from participating in such forms of instruction which are accredited.

b. We believe that the successful completion of 12 or more units per quarter is the measure of "full time status". A student carrying 12 units or more is considered to be a full time student. The VA regulations relate to "a course", but they do not define "a course". Without the definition, it is most difficult to apply the regulations to our programs.

c. Attendance is accounted for during the two census weeks for all graded-full term classes and those records are maintained by the Registrar. Students in graded-short term classes are accounted for by actual attendeence recorded in ledgers maintained by each instructor, who submits them at the end of the term. Any added requirements by the VA is a violation of premises, above.

d. We measure progres in terms of units completed, not hours in class. Units are related to instructional time. One unit of credit generally equals one hour of lecture time or three hours of laboratory time. In clinical situations, the relationship between hours and units varies.

3. RECORD KEEPING

a. V.A.'s Record Keeping Requirements
The V.A.'s record keeping requirements on the college are excessive. The processing fee given to the college does not begin to cover the imposed costs. In addition to clerical functions required in the accounting procedure for veterans, additional duties are placed on the Admissions and Records Office for special handling of veteran/students records, for special evaluation of veterans' records, for specialized procedures for monitoring status, for specialized counseling, and for added duties in the administration of veterans programs. Non of these are reimbursed.

b. Computer Assistance
This college has its own computer. It serves first the instructional program and second the administrative functions. The demands upon it are excessive. The V.A. record keeping requirements have created impositions on the computer time for which the

b. Computer Assistance Continued
college is not reimbursed.

We believe that the college should be reimbursed for excess costs caused by the V.A.'s record keeping policies and procedures.

c. We feel our record keeping system serves the veterans of this college in an adequate manner. In light of recent severe financial restrictions in the college the added requirements of the V.A. are a hardship.

4. SAFEGUARDS

We believe that the best safeguard to prevent abuse is to pay veterans benefits to students for the completion of courses not for enrollment in courses.

Not only would the above suggestion preclude waste of taxpayers money through overpayment of veterans it would preclude the waste of taxpayers money expended by the colleges in meeting V.A. requirements.

5. CATALOGS AND BULLETINS

We have no objections to the current requirements.

We have difficulty in keeping abreast of the current V.A. rules and regulations and because of it, have subscribed to the *Federal Register*. This is an added expenditure of money and time.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Regulations
The greatest problems are (1) "*knowing*" and keeping current on the V.A. policies and procedures. (2) trying to "*understand*" the various interpretations made by individual V.A. Regional Offices, and (3) complying with them under restrictive financial conditions now ahead.

We suggest that the V.A. publish it policies and procedures in a format like "Army Regulations" or the "The California Education Code". These regulations would be numbered and indexed. The distribution would be to all agencies and institutions concerned. Any changes would be made in a form that could be easily posted to the master regulations. This would standardize the interpretations.

A second problem is that the V.A. Policies and Procedures are written within our context and expected to apply to others. As a result a policy written to correct a problem in a propietory trade school in the East has little relevance to a community College in California. As a result, clarification is needed. These vary region by region and contribute to confusion and lack of uniformity in compliance.

b. **Legislation**
We believe that if the policies and procedures were changed to cause the payment of veterans for course work completed, most of the problems would be eliminated for: Veterans, the V.A., and colleges.

ALL:eb
6/14/78

Columbia College • Chicago

600 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago Illinois 60605
(312) 663-1600

June 12, 1978

Response to William G. Shannon and Associates Study

1) Standards of Progress

We feel it is very difficult to monitor the Veteran/Student's progress simply because a student is a veteran. It appears as though many veterans are married persons, some with families. These individuals may have a difficult time, due to financial situations, trying to pursue a degree program on a continuous full time basis. Although a veteran may drop down to half time enrollment for one or more semesters, it does not necessarily mean he or she is not making progress towards a degree.

With regards to our measurement of student progress and identification of student problems, in this area, we have implemented the following:

At the beginning of each semester, all students whose grades place them in the following categories are contacted by the Academic Advisor, and requested to set up appointments to discuss academic problems:

1. students whose GPA is below 2.0
2. students who have recorded more than 25% semester hours incomplete
3. and/or students who have more than 25% semester hours withdrawn

If these students do not respond, they are sent a letter informing them that unless incompletes are completed by the end of the semester, and the number of W's reduced, they will not be permitted to register the following semester. Students who do respond and avail themselves of the services of the advisor, and/or teacher, are expected to demonstrate substantial improvement i.e.,

1. raising the cumulative grade point average to 2.0 or making significant progress toward such an average
2. satisfactorily completing (C grades) at least 75% of the classes enrolled in at the beginning of the semester

Regarding Section 1780 (a) (4) of the 38 U.S.C., we feel that this area needs further clarification from the VA.

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600 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60605
(312) 663-1600

Regarding mitigating circumstances on unsatisfactory progress reports, our opinion is that the procedure is fair, enabling the veteran to explain his or her situation, defending the mitigating circumstance.

2. Seat Time

We consider 12 semester hours Full time.

Our institution would maintain that if a student is not dropped from a class because of non attendance that he/she is meeting for the required class meetings.

Credit is assigned on the basis of the number of semester hours that the class carries, ex. a class that grants 3 semester hours of credit is scheduled to meet a minimum of three hours per week over the course of the semester.

3. Record Keeping

Although our institution is satisfied with our own system of record keeping, it appears as if the VA generates too many unnessary forms. We do not utilize a computer in our VA record keeping. It would be much easier for us to keep records if we had computer assistance.

4. Safeguards

A. initiate monthly or bi-monthly progress reports
B. changing the VA educational loan check procedure
C. eliminating the "advanced payment" certification procedure

5. Catalogs and Bulletins

We believe that this information is general and that we must indicate it anyway, since other federal agencies require much of the same information.

6. Recommendations

We believe that a general review of existing VA regulations should be performed in order to:

A. access the educational needs of the Vietnam Veteran/Student
B. access the educational needs of the Veteran/Student who has not earned a degree but would like to return to school because of remaining eligibility
C. properly certify and review the qualifications of all trade schools so that the veteran/student is not using up his/her eligibility at an institution that may be "questionable."

Office of Veterans Affairs
COLUMBIA COLLEGE

DEVRY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE
479 Green Street, Woodbridge, New Jersey 07095

BELL & HOWELL SCHOOLS

JUN 22 REC'D

June 19, 1978

Mr. William Schultz
Office of Veteran Affairs
311 N. 5th Street
Camden, New Jersey 08102

Dear Bill:

Since we are in the NCD category for VA regulation purposes, most of these areas are already carefully reported because we are required to keep closer control over the veterans attending our proprietary institution.

Having gone through the discussion guide, the following opinions or observations are offered. They are listed in the order in which they occur in the discussion guide.

1) Standards of Progress

We measure progress by grades and attendance. A student must maintain, as in any educational institution, a minimum level of achievement of 2.00/4.00. If the student exceeds 60 hours of class time in one term (out of a maximum 375 hours term), then he is suspended. We agree that students should not be paid for courses not completed, and we approve of the right of the veteran to appeal his loss of benefits due to unsatisfactory progress. Occasionally there are mitigating circumstances which should be considered.

2) Seat Time

Our credits are determined by VA regulations, and by the state approving agency. However, as an NCD it does not seem equitable that college students in traditional university situations are paid the same amount of money for 12 hours of instruction per week, while our technical students must attend over 22 hours of instruction per week for the same assistance amount.

3) Record Keeping

To date, we have experienced little, if any, problems in record keeping. We are not computerized totally either. However, it is frustrating when we are required to keep exceptional records, when the VARO often has no idea where a file is located. If we gave them some of the excuses or confusions they give us, our veteran student would never get paid.

4) Safeguards

Any reasonable measure, which is uniformly applied to all students and institutions should be utilized. When money is given away freely, then some accounting of its destination should be made, both accurately and comprehensively.

5) Catalogs

Catalog information merely assists the student in deciding. Disseminated information can only help those looking for answers. Our legal staff is constantly aware of Federal rules and regulations, and their changes.

6) Recommendations

a. Regulations need to be less ambiguous.

b. Legislation should be less, not more.

c. Veterans, regardless of conflicts engaged in, should be awarded educational assistance. By making the regulations and legislation less confusing, perhaps more veterans would take part in the programs designed to assist them, rather than stand back, in confusion, from the ambiguities which are so common.

d. Generally, co-ordination is poor and overly long in coming. Those who co-ordinate forget that they are altering people, not words on paper.

Now that you have the comments, I am confident that they will, at least, be passed along. Thanks for the opportunity to express them even though some are superficial.

If I can be of any other assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Al Lavenziano
Assistant Dean of Students

AL:clg

DIABLO VALLEY COLLEGE · PLEASANT HILL · CALIFORNIA · 94523

June 12, 1978

TO: Gary M. Gallery

FROM: J. H. Slusser

Dear Mr. Gallery,

Inasmuch as I probably will be unable to attend the Veterans Advisory meeting in Sacramento on Thursday, I am submitting the enclosed papers for Dr. Shannon's perusal.

I am aware that the reason deemed necessary by the Veterans Administration for Standards of Progress, is mainly because a small number of schools not properly reporting student veterans' withdrawals and/or change in status which caused large sums of money to be unduly paid to veterans using the G.I. Educational Assistance program. It is my sincere belief that standards are necessary, however they should parallel the school policies as indicated in the college catalogs that have been approved by the Office of Private Postsecondary Education. It would be quite appropriate for the Veterans Administration to invite input from the colleges for policy making, before submitting to the schools regulations that cannot be adhered to. This course of action would be beneficial to the school, the VA and last but not least to the veteran.

SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Our institution measures student veterans' progress by a 2.0 G.P.A as a minimum requirement. If the veteran fails to reach this G.P.A. for two consecutive semesters, the VA is notified and certification of attendance is not made for this student until an "OK" is received from a VA counselor. Also this same policy is implemented when the student fails to complete half as many units as attempted during two consecutive semesters.

SEAT-TIME

I would like to see veterans receive full credit for short-term courses on a semester basis rather than having their status change whenever completion of the course brings them below prescribed enrollment unit level - unless another course of equal unit value is picked up during the semester.

TUTORING

The Veterans Administration requires a student to be earning less than a C grade in a class to qualify for Tutorial Assistance under the VA program. Tabulations from a recent survey at this school showed conclusively that the students would like to qualify for counseling in order to bring a C grade up to a better grade. I concur with this feeling.

I hope the enclosed materials and suggestions will be helpful to Dr. Shannon in his report to the Veterans Administration.

Sincerely,

Jim Slusser

J.H. Slusser
Dean of Admissions & Records

Enclosures

801 WETMORE AVENUE • EVERETT, WASHINGTON 98201 • PHONE 259-7151 AREA 206

June 21, 1978

Mr. Steve Howard
Veterans Programs Coordinator
Tacoma Community College
5900 South 12th Street
Tacoma, WA 98465

Re: Meeting with Bill Shannon
on June 19, 1978

Dear Steve:

Sorry I had to leave early, and most probably the comments following were left with Dr. Shannon; however, I felt that I should express some feelings about the meeting which could be forwarded to Dr. Shannon.

I feel there is a basic concept that is either not understood by Congress or has not been brought, with force, to their attention. The Vietnam era G. I. Bill was designed to provide an education for veterans of that era so that they could go back to the market place with skills that could make them competitive in the world of work after their two, three, or four years displacement. "Generally speaking" the group of young people who served during the Vietnam era are not the most highly motivated nor have basic skills necessary to cope in the arena of higher education. Yet every obstacle that is placed in their path by the regulatory actions of the Veterans Administration has provided more frustrating experiences in an area where they have previously been totally frustrated - the area of education.

The punitive kinds of action (18 contact hours as opposed to 12 contact hours) that the individual involved in high school completion must be enrolled in, the rules relating to change of major, and the inability of the Veterans Administration to provide counseling in a reasonable amount of time, automatically eliminates opportunities for low achievers to succeed and to truly identify appropriate vocational goals. Highly motivated veterans have done well in coping with the restrictions and stumbling blocks; however, they would have done as well without the G. I. Bill.

The four-hundred-million figure that has been quoted to us is a paper figure that is being repaid by many veterans through reattendance (with no income) and was brought about primarily by the prepayment mode that the V. A. used in spite of protestations by educators across the nation. Although no one in education wants in any way to be involved in "abuses" "rip-offs" or more appropriately overpayments; I am sure that the cost of one week's operation of the war in the 1969-70 years is well in excess of the actual amount of money that has been overpaid. I do not think anybody in Washington D. C. is using this as a bench mark with which to give them a true perspective of the G. I. educational programs benefits.

If Congress is truly interested in straightening out what they perceive as a "screw up" in the G. I. benefits for education; I would suggest that they get away from the "picky" definitions, policies, procedures regarding seat time, satisfactory progress, college catalogs, etc., and return to the concept of helping some people (citizens of the United States) who helped us. States with legislative concerns and higher educational supervisory boards that are involved with accredited institutions do not need their integrity impugned nor regulations laid upon them by a Federal agency (the V. A.) who has no business in education and who obviously could care less about the veterans they are supposed to serve.

I am sure the Congress would not accept a broad philosophical statement such as this, however, it is impossible to talk in terms of seat time, satisfactory progress, etc., with the apparent lack of concern about the real reason for the Vietnam era and G. I. Bill.

Sincerely,

William J. Deller
Dean of Students

WJD:ma
cc: A. Zimmerman
L. Rodgers
K. Kurtson

GENESEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COLLEGE ROAD — P.O. BOX 718, BATAVIA, N.Y. 14020 (716) 343-0055

Office of the President

July 5, 1978

Dr. William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

The following are our observations regarding problems relating to Veterans' Benefits:

1. More information on Educational benefits (the amount) for the Post-Vietnam era veteran. (Chapter 32)
2. The lack of timely:
   a. Circulation of OVB circulars to the schools
   b. Distribution of new forms
   c. The abrupt changes which take place during a semester which affect the veteran after the fact.
3. Veterans' deferments: The veteran is given a deferment which entitles him to defer his college bill until his educational benefit check arrives. Even though he receives monthly educational benefits, we cannot assure the college that he will pay his bill.

I hope these comments are helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Stuart Steiner
President

SS:hm

THE
GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY

Washington, D.C. 20052 / Office of the Registrar / (202) 676-6100

December 22, 1976

Andrew H. Thornton
Director Education and Rehabilitation Services
V.A. Central Office, Room 436 (224)
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20420

Dear Sir:

Higher education as a whole has long held in esteem the Veterans Administration for the massive operation that it is called upon to administer as well as the effectiveness with which it has accomplished its function. Admittedly, it has not been without difficulty largely, if not solely, due to complex and sometimes contradictory statutory language requiring control yet by implication transferring such control to the individual recipient of the benefits. This tests the understanding and integrity of each recipient and impacts on all those involved in the data flow.

Recent legislation (94-502) is damaging the relationship between the V.A. and the higher education community in a way which is completely unfair to those in each area whose purpose is to serve the veteran and eligible student and to effect the spirit of the legislation on veteran's rights and benefits. The changes to the several Chapters of Title 38, USC which were made to "tighten controls" to prevent the recent excesses have had the effect of a scatter bomb levied at all institutions rather than affording those institutions which needed help - as identified by the compliance survey - a few techniques of administrative management of data, expanded definitions of "progress" toward a degree, and suggested means of evaluating better new curricular offerings. Twenty-five years in the higher education community has taught me that the personnel in better than 95% of the institutions struggle to do right and well, those responsibilities assumed to enable the students enrolled at their institutions to learn, to obtain and maintain the benefits to which the student is entitled, and to be assured of professional handling of records with respect for privacy. Simplifying the procedures in the complex institutions which have developed in the past three decades is no easy task and help is needed, not the threat of liability.

In a separate communication, I have addressed the problem of the "two-year rule" making a rather simple request for modification. Here I wish to request a change, again of either the statutory language (if such permission does not already exist) or of the regulations, so that well established institutions that have been carrying on varying types of programs of education within a reasonably defined community (under a continuing self-evaluation process as expected by the regional and/or professional accrediting body) can continue to operate on such proven bases without the shifting demands and expectations such as those promulgated in the recent memoranda from the regional office. The memo to which I refer is that enunciating the new policies resulting from the new legislation regarding "courses" (curricula) being offered at "branches or extensions", at "additional facilities", or as "itinerant courses".

The George Washington University has for many years been offering in a responsible way the opportunity for continuing higher education to all segments of the population in communities as well as at government installations in and around the District of Columbia. Some of these are quite close; others as far away as/80 miles. The logic of this type of operation from the outset has been to have one person, the professor, travel the distance between the campus and the location of the class (offered in a facility equally appropriate for instruction as those available on campus and readily accessible to members of the visited community). Only subjects (units of subject matter) and "courses" (curricula) that can be taught satisfactorily in the facilities available and which do NOT compete with those of other institutions located thereby are offered in this manner. The restriction of this, now, to a distance within 30 miles of the campus, to a currently established "separately approved branch and extension", or to newly established "separately approved branches or extensions" for each location seems to be without justification as does also the calculation of an 85/15 ratio for each "course" (curricula) located at each such location.

At the very least, private higher education should be able to operate within a mileage range similar to that accorded public institutions in the same area (since taxing jurisdiction has little relevance). Why should a local private institution be restricted to a normal commuting distance defined as "ordinarily within 30 miles" while the local state institution is restricted only to the boundaries of the state. Obviously, the disparity between these two examples portrays readily the inequity.

Would you be kind enough to advise me what possibly could be done to afford the University greater flexibility in the present definition of the "normal commuting distance". I would respect very much your reasoned opinion as to the fairness of the present interpretation of the new statutes from your vantage point of seeing both the appropriate use of off-campus programs as well as the excesses which must be brought under control.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Gebhardtsbauer
Registrar

RG/jsw
cc: Dr. Harold Bright, Provost & Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Alvin Jensen, Assoc. Dean, College of General Studies
Mrs. Wolff, Veterans Counselor

GROSSMONT COLLEGE
8800 GROSSMONT COLLEGE DRIVE · EL CAJON · CALIFORNIA 92020 · TELEPHONE: (714) 465-1700

June 14, 1978

To: Dr. William Shannon,
Consultant

FROM: Terry Volz,
Director of Special Services

SUBJECT: Response to Guidelines Provided for the June 15 Meeting

Response to Selected Topics for Discussion:

The mission assigned to Institutions of Higher Learning is to provide a student the opportunity to pursue independently an area of interest for either personal growth enhancement or in pursuit of professional or vocational goals. Educational institutions, in order to assist a student to pursue these goals, establishes guidelines to enable the student to progress at the rate allowable by their intellectual capacity and/or personal constraints. These guidelines take the form of Standards of Progress which cover the amount of time that a student need be in attendance during a particular course offering, progress that a student must make to earn a particular grade, and a minimal Grade Point Average that a student must maintain in order to continue to pursue one's goal. These guidelines tend to be set into the realm of procedures that are designed to assist the student, not be restrictive and punitive. However, institutions do recognize the fact that some students will not take advantage of the opportunity and therefore do need to have some punitive restrictions applied; therefore, the need for "F" grades, no-credit grades, probation and disqualification policies.

The attitude of the Veterans Administration since August 1975 has been to impose upon the institution a practice completely dichotomous with that of the educational philosophy. A veteran student does not have the option to experiment in an area without having a grade declared punitive. Probation and disqualification policies have had to be altered. The question still stands, can the Veterans Administration impose upon an educational institution a policy that is discriminatory against one group of students? Should an agency of the Federal Government have the prerogative to force a State educational institution to change policies, particularly in the event of these changes creating the expenditure of thousands of dollars of "tax payers" money to comply with these Federal regulations?

The answers to the above are obviously NO!

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY · AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The prohibition of payment of benefits to veterans for those courses for which a grade is assigned is not used to compute GPA is in compliance with the general philosophy of the educational institution. A Lack of Progress policy for this institution states that when a student receives 50% or more W's or NCr's that that person goes on Lack of Progress Probation. This, in essence, is punitive against the student because this has long range effect against the student's progress at the institution.

Mitigating circumstances should be determined by the Veterans Administration, not the educational institution. Mitigating circumstances, as they relate to Appendix "O", should be handled in the same manner; however, the whole concept of Appendix "O" being implemented by the educational institution is a further encroachment of the procedures of the institution and a needless expense within the monitoring process.

Grossmont College has developed a system of monitoring that is assisted by the computer. A weekly DP report of activity (W's) is generated. At the time of the record of this printout, any change in veteran status generates a computer printed 1999b as well as a data mailer to the student informing the student of the activity change. The computer also provides printouts of all students on Academic or Lack of Progress Disqualification each semester.

Monitoring beyond this is done by hand. This mainly constitutes the monitoring of authorized courses. Implementation of Appendix "O" or "G" has not been completely determined beyond determination of the figure of approximately $1,000. a week in additional time to monitor for this new regulation.

In light of the recent legislation in California, ie., Proposition 13, it is extremely unlikely that additional monies will be available to take on any further monitoring tasks regarding veterans progress. In fact, it is going to be extremely difficult to maintain sufficient staff to complete the certification process to allow veterans to even initiate a request for benefits.

This is a problem. It is a problem for the institution; therefore, further, a problem for the Veterans Administration.

Recommendations

A. Regulations

The need for changes in the Veterans Administration policies and procedures must reflect the capability of educational institutions to physically, as well as philosophically, respond to the regulations. The need to curb abuse of veterans benefits is certainly the aim of the institution as well as the Veterans Administration. But it must be recognized that the rather widely publicized abuse of benefits in the late 1960's - early 1970's is no longer with us. The veteran of today is as seriously pursuing an educational or vocational goal as a student paying his/her own way. This change in veteran student population needs to be recognized and addressed.

B. Legislation

The legislation changes need to reflect the problems stated above, recognize the change in student veteran population as well as the serious physical limitations on educational institutions primarily in California.

C. Veterans

The legislation on modification of regulations should assist veterans to become more personally responsible for the pursuit of their education.

The basic concept regarding a veteran's education while receiving benefits should be between the veteran and the Veterans Administration, not between the veteran, the educational institution and the Veterans Administration.

D. General

The issue of liability imposed on educational institutions for "Non-Compliance" with veteran regulations and procedures must be addressed. A tax supported institution such as a Community College in California has never been, is not now, and I cannot invision them in a position to take personal advantage of Veteran Administration monies. If liabilities are to be assessed, let it be at a private training program that exists solely to receive Veterans Administration funding and benefits and it is sometimes questionable as to the value of the educational process provided.

TV/jr

Harrisburg Community College, Pa.

CHAPTER II

THE VA WORK-STUDY STUDENT, CONFLICTS AND MOTIVATION

VA-VCIP Conflict Restated

The need for VA Work-Study students and their importance in policy terms was discussed previously in this paper in view of the conflict between the VCIP Program of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Veterans Administration. Two examples, I believe, will further explain this conflict and will further document the importance of the VA Work-Study students.

Under existing laws, veterans have ten (10) years from release from active duty in which to completely utilize G.I. Bill Benefits. Two of the statutory requirements of the VCIP Program are outreach and recruitment. However, Illustration VI, Changes in Enrollment, shows that commencing in 1976, more veterans are losing benefits than are gaining G.I. Bill eligibility. The Delimiting Date provision of the G.I. Bill is negating the efforts of outreach and recruitment by institutions of higher learning in the nation. While institutions of higher learning are receiving VCIP awards from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to "service" veterans, the Veterans Administration, by statute, is decreasing the number of veterans eligible for the G.I. Bill Benefits.

Another example concerns satisfactory progress. The importance of VCIP lies in the outreach, recruitment, counseling and special services of educationally and economically disadvantaged veterans. The statutory law of the G.I. Bill, in most cases is so stringent-

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TABLE IV

CHANGES IN ENROLLMENT

This year's decline (1976)

Following are the numbers of veterans enrolled by colleges and universities this fall and last fall:

	Sept. 1975	Sept. 1976	Net Loss
Two-year college	617,227	394,679	-222,548
Four-year college ...	394,893	275,222	-119,671
Total undergraduate..	1,012,115	659,901	-342,214
Graduate students....	89,820	56,677	-33,138
GRAND TOTAL	1,101,935	726,578	-375,357

Projections for the future

Following are the estimated changes in the number of veterans eligible for G.I. Bill Benefits:

	Gaining Eligibility	Losing Eligibility	Net Loss
1976-77	380,000	459,000	-79,000
1977-78	346,000	655,000	-309,000
1978-79	346,000	839,000	-493,000
1979-80	371,000	899,000	-528,000
1980-81	371,000	863,000	-432,000
1981-82	371,000	733,000	-362,000
1982-83	371,000	494,000	-123,000
1983-84	371,000	455,000	-84,000
1984-85	371,000	419,000	-43,000

SOURCE: The Chronicle Of Higher Education, October 18, 1976, p. 10.

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and inflexible that it penalizes the target group of the VCIP program, i.e., the "disadvantaged student/veteran". A specific provision is that Public Law 94-502, the Vietnam Era Veterans Education and Employment Assistance Act of 1976, states that if a veteran terminates from school or reduces his credit load, he/she must establish mitigating circumstances with the Veterans Administration. If the mitigating circumstances are not satisfactory to the Veterans Administration, benefits are terminated or reduced to the first day of classes no matter when the fact occurred. This will result in a substantial debt owed to the Federal Government but more importantly, it will discourage the veteran from pursuing his/her studies under the G.I. Bill. Even if the mitigating circumstances are acceptable, satisfactory progress is just another VA Regulation that a veteran must adhere to in order to obtain G.I. Bill Benefits that are earned by serving in the U.S. Military service.

One should keep in mind that these regulations are in addition to the requirements of the college that are approved by the State Approving Agency in Pennsylvania. It is a fact of life that veterans must comply to two sets of standards - those of the college he/she is attending and those of the Veterans Administration. The Veterans Administration Vietnam Veterans' Council, Philadelphia, PA. has recommended the following statement to be included in the catalogs of institutions of higher learning.

> The Veterans Administration requires that students receiving VA Educational Benefits meet certain standards of progress in order to continue to receive

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> those benefits. In some cases these standards of progress may vary from the requirements of this institution. Therefore, it is conceivable that a student veteran attending ________ could find his VA Educational Benefits in jeopardy, while remaining in satisfactory academic standing with the institution. All veterans are advised to become familiar with those requirements which are located ________, and are available through the Veterans Certifying Official and ____________.[10]

While these are only two examples of the many conflicts, they are enough to discourage veterans in utilizing the G.I. Bill. Harrisburg Area Community College, as with most other community colleges in Pennsylvania, has a retention problem with veteran/students. While many factors are involved, they can be traced to two (2) major problems.

1) Veterans are losing benefits under the G.I. Bill due to the Delimiting Date.

2) Many veterans do not want to "go through the hassle" of utilizing G.I. Bill Benefits due to the many VA Regulations.

As one veteran said to me in a counseling interview of August 8, 1977, "It's (the G.I. Bill) not worth the hassle and red-tape." The G.I. Bill in this sense, not only is in conflict with the "VCIP Program but also seems to be defeating its own purpose. But as stated previously, the VA Work-Study students do most of the work for both agencies whereas a minimum of two full-time professionals working in Veterans Affairs at each college campus with a substantial veterans enrollment would be required if the program was not utilized. Again, the VA Work-Study students fulfill the requirements of the

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[10] Veterans Administration Vietnam Veterans' Civic Council Recommendation 310-7, Philadelphia, PA., (March 2, 1977).

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VCIP Program of HEW and the VA to the benefit of veterans, the college and the taxpayer. The VA Work-Study students also provide valuable peer counseling.

To ensure clarification of this conflict, Harrisburg Area Community College receives a $13,647.00 award for veterans' services from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This award mandates that the college maintain a full-time professional Veterans Affairs Officer to coordinate these "services," i.e., out-reach, recruitment and special educational programs.

However, the college also receives approximately $2829.00 from the Veterans Administration each year to certify veterans to the VA and comply to satisfactory progress and other VA Regulations. Although the amounts received from HEW and the VA are not comparable, seventy-five percent of the Veterans Affairs Officer's time is spent in complying to VA Regulations. If the college did not comply to VA Regulations, it would not remain approved for G.I. Bill Benefits. If the college did not maintain a full-time Veterans Affairs Officer and offer mandated services, it would not be eligible for the VCIP award from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Again, it is not feasible to hire two full-time professionals in Veterans Affairs to comply to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the Veterans Administration although this would be necessary in the absence of the VA Work-Study Program. Colleges must utilize VA Work-study students to satisfy the requirements of HEW and the VA.

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At present, there is some hope for the resolution of these conflicts. On June 22, 1977, U.S. District Judge Earl R. Larson, Minnesota ruled the satisfactory progress regulation of the VA as unconstitutional. He stated in his ruling that is caused irreparable harm and violated constitutional rights under due process.[11] In addition, Senate Bill 457 was reported out by the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee in early August that would transfer the VCIP Program from HEW to the VA.

APPENDIX A

VA REPORTING FEE SURVEY

he following is the actual cost to ertify a veteran annually. This er ns to certifications, changes, onitoring standards of progress, etc.

INSTITUTION: Harrisburg Area Community College

Address: 3300 Cameron [illegible]
Harrisburg, Pa. [illegible]

SALARIES	EXPENDITURES
Coordinators	$ 10,250
Counselors (fulltime)	N/A
Parttime counselors	N/A
Secretaries (include substitutes, relief, etc.)	3,640
Clerks	N/A
Student Aids	N/A
Fringe Benefits	1,845

SERVICES	EXPENDITURES
Conferences	$ 350
Postage	500
Printing	75
Mileage	150
Other	N/A

OTHER SERVICES		EXPENDITURES
13.	Space Rental (if any)	N/A
14.	Equip. Purchases ($50 or less usually not depreciable)	N/A
15.	Equip. Depreciation (5-10 yr. linear dep. rate)	N/A
16.	Supplies & Duplicating	$ [illegible]
17.	Telephone	100
18.	Other utilities	105
19.	Office cost of maintenance, squ. ft.	165
20.	Janitorial Service (squ. ft. x cost)	100
21.	Computer Costs (Pro-rata share unless actual cost available)	250
22.	Administrative (Other) (Expense increased by OVA usually requiring assistance from Asst. Dean, Pres. or others who participate in OVA decisions, etc.)	1,[illegible]
23.	Other (specify)	N/A

TOTAL EXPENSE $ 19,330

COST TO CERTIFY EACH VETERAN $ 25.07

(Divide total cost by number of veterans the VA pays for on printout - not your count of veterans.)

Signature
Veterans Affairs Officer
(Title)

APPENDIX B

VETERANS' COST-OF-INSTRUCTION PROGRAM (VCIP)
PROPOSED BUDGET BREAKDOWN

FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1977

NAME OF INSTITUTION/CONSORTIUM Harrisburg Area Community College	ADDRESS (Number, Street, City, State & Zip Code) 3300 Cameron Street Road Harrisburg, Pa. 17110	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 17

NAME & TITLE OF OFFICER OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS COORDINATOR David K. Kurtz Veterans Affairs Officer	TELEPHONE AREA CODE 717	NUMBER 236-[illegible]	EXTENSION ext. [illegible]	PERCENTAGE OF VCIP AWARD*

TOTAL VETERANS' COST-OF-INSTRUCTION AWARD $ 15,647.00

AMOUNT OF AWARD TO BE USED BY INSTITUTION FOR INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENSES (Institutional Share) $ -0- 0 %

AMOUNT TO BE CONTRIBUTED BY INSTITUTION (Non-VCIP funds) $ 14,538.00

AMOUNT OF AWARD TO BE USED FOR OFFICE OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS $ 15,647.00

EXPENDITURES FOR THE OFFICE OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS (OVA)	FROM VETERANS' COST-OF-INSTRUCTION FUNDS	FROM FUNDS TO BE CONTRIBUTED BY INSTITUTION	TOTAL EXPENDITURES FOR THE OFFICE OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS	
1. PERSONAL SERVICES: (Salaries **)				
a. COORDINATOR	$10,250 (FT)	$ 300 (overtime)	$10,550	
b. COUNSELORS	-0-	-0-	-0-	
c. OUTREACH PERSONNEL	-0-	VA Work-study	12,500	
d. RECRUITERS	-0-	-0-	-0-	
e. SECRETARIES	3,640	-0-	3,640	
f. CLERKS	-0-	-0-	-0-	
g. OTHER (Specify titles)	—	—	—	
a.	—	—	—	
b.	—	—	—	
h. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1,757	88	1,845	
TOTAL SALARIES	$15,647 *	$12,888	$28,535	[illegible] %
2. SERVICES:				
a. CONSULTANTS/CONTRACTS	-0-	$ 350	$ 350	
b. TRAVEL: PROFESSIONAL (Per diem)	-0-	50	50	
RECRUITMENT & OUTREACH	-0-	100	100	
c. Communications (Postage, Advertising, Publicity)	-0-	1,000	1,000	
TOTAL SERVICES	-0- *	1,500	1,500	0 %
3. OTHERS: (Specify below)				
a. Equipment Purchases	-0-	-0-	-0-	
b. Supplies	-0-	$150	$150	
c.	—	—	—	
d.	—	—	—	
TOTAL OTHERS	— *	$150	$150	0 %
GRAND TOTALS	$15,647	$14,538	$30,185	

*INDICATE IN APPROPRIATE COLUMN THE PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VCIP AWARD
**INDICATE BY SYMBOL (FT) PERSONS SATISFYING FULL-TIME REQUIREMENT

Harrisburg Community College

should so much of the VA budget support such activities? Why the devil should the veteran's

physicians or foreign graduates [illegible] understand?

An Opinion

A Better G.I. Bill

By Dave Kurtz
Veterans Affairs Officer
Harrisburg Area Community College
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Executive Vice President
Pennsylvania Association of Veterans Program Administrators (PAVPA)

In view of the distressful and disruptive situation between the Veterans Administration and Institutions of Higher Learning concerning VA regulations passed by Congress in October 1976 as PL 94-502, especially as these regulations relate to additional burdens placed upon Institutions of Higher Learning to monitor satisfactory progress of veterans and to maintain state approval of courses for veterans, I make the following recommendation for changing the administrative procedure for the GI Bill.

My recommendation is that the GI Bill be administered on a reimbursement basis dependent upon the number of credits a veteran completes with a satisfactory grade. For example, a veteran attempts 15 credits in a semester. This veteran withdraws from one course (3 credits) at mid-semester and receives a final failing grade in another course (3 credits). This veteran would be eligible for VA benefits for 9 credits (¾ time) for that semester.

At the completion of the semester, each college would mail transcripts of all veterans attending that college to the VA. The VA would then adjudicate veterans' benefits from the transcripts. For example, in the above mentioned case, the adjudicator would see that 9 credits were completed satisfactorily and that the veteran had one W and one F grade. The adjudicator would then process for ¾ time benefits for that semester. Assuming that this veteran has no dependents, he/she would be eligible for $219 times approximately 4 months for that semester. Total due this veteran for that semester would be $876.

Of course, the amount would increase for veterans with a family and additional dependents. The GI Bill rate schedule would remain the same. Only the method of payment would change.

The only inequity of this proposed recommendation is what monies the veteran will use for living expenses during the first semester? Each veteran could receive counseling and be eligible for a loan or advance stipend based on the living expenses of the veteran (to a limit) and repayable at the date and schedule dependent upon the veteran's credit load and GI payments. This counseling program could be operated by the school with possible VA appropriations rather than VA counseling.

The loan program can be easily administered and the repayment plan can be flexible. For example, if a veteran expects to receive $876 in GI Bill payments during the first semester, he/she could borrow $876 repayable over a four year period, the veteran will receive approximately $7,884.00 from the GI Bill exclusive of summer courses if he/she continues on a ¾ time basis. After the loan is repaid, the veteran would have received $7008.00 in GI Bill monies for education and living expenses. The loan program could also be administered on a deferred payment plan. The money saved by reducing overpayments and by reducing record keeping costs of the colleges would pay for the administering of this recommendation with still a substantial savings.

In addition to reducing overpayments, minimizing abuse, allowing more efficient GI benefits to veterans and easing tensions between the VA and IHLs, this proposed change would finally resolve policy conflicts between the Veterans' Cost-Of-Instruction Program (VCIP) of the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare and the VA. This would allow Veterans Affairs Officers in colleges across the nation to devote more time to "services" for veterans mandated by VCIP such as veterans' outreach, recruitment, counseling, and special programs.

The advantages of this proposed change are obvious. The college can cut costs in required paperwork. (The VA reporting fee survey completed in November 1976 indicated that it costs $25.07 per veteran per year at Harrisburg Area Community College to certify veterans to the VA and to monitor satisfactory progress, much lower than the national average of $4[illegible].) The VA saves money in a GI Bill that will minimize abuse and drastically reduce overpayments, the veterans will receive timely checks (one check per semester) with minimal probability of error, the VA and colleges will have a good working relationship again, and the conflict between VCIP and the VA, which has existed since the inception of VCIP in early 1973, will be resolved. Of course, all the above mentioned will result in a savings to all taxpayers of this country.

Harrisburg Area Community College responded to the VA regulations passed by Congress as PL 94-502, published in the Federal Register of December 16, 1976, with the following four concerns:

1. IT PRESENTLY COSTS $25.07 per veteran per year to certify veterans attending HACC to the VA and to monitor satisfactory progress while being reimbursed only $3.00 per veteran. The new VA regulations placed an added financial burden on the college and additional "red tape" for veterans attending college under the GI Bill.

2. THE VETERANS AFFAIRS Office of HACC, as most colleges in the nation, is operated under a grant by VCIP of the Dept. of HEW which mandates services for veterans: outreach, recruitment, full-time Veterans Affairs Office, counseling and special veterans' programs. The VA's regulations are in conflict with the VCIP Program. Therefore, HACC recommended in the Programs Operation Report submitted to HEW on October 15, 1976, that the VA and the VCIP Program of HEW coordinate programs and objectives since their regulations and requirements affect the same veterans' population on each college campus.

3. THE ADDITIONAL VA regulations come at a time when most colleges' veterans enrollment has decreased by approximately 34% due to the delimiting date of June 1.

See KURTZ Pg. 8

Harrisburg Community College
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600 Winnebago, 7th Floor
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401
Attention Charles Sanborn
Or by calling collect (512) 366-2230
Equal Opportunity Employer M-F

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1976. In addition, more veterans are losing benefits than those who are gaining eligibility for GI Bill benefits. IHLs are actively trying to make up this decrease in veteran enrollment through active outreach and by urging extension of the 10-year delimiting date.

4. **THE REGULATIONS** seem to be in conflict with institutional philosophy and policy. They border on mandating a blanket policy for all IHLs with a veterans' population which is in direct conflict with the institution's right to establish policy as approved by the State Approving Agency.

I am and always have been a strong advocate for veterans and veterans' benefits. However, under the present policy with recent VA regulations, the GI Bill is burdensome and in many cases penalizes veterans who have served our country. This proposed GI Bill would be a much better benefit to the veteran although it does not appear as such on the surface. Regulations are need and Harrisburg Area Community College continues to monitor satisfactory progress of veterans with sincere and asserted effort. However, I sometimes resent that this country has chosen the GI Bill as being the "abused program". If other federal programs would be administered as the GI Bill, the federal budget would realize immediate savings in a phenomenal amount.

With the present distressful situation, a practical GI Bill is a necessity.

VFW Raps Carter On U.N. Seat For Vietnam

R. D. "Bulldog" Smith, National Commander-in-Chief of the 1.8 million member Veterans of Foreign Wars of United States, termed the reported "agreement" of the U.S. to drop American opposition to Communist Vietnam's admission to the UN "a pathetic, limp-wristed retreat from both honor and common sense."

The VFW leader continued, "The organization I head includes more than one-half million honorably discharged veterans of America's involvement in Vietnam. All of us feel betrayed, but how must our Vietnam veterans feel?

"I note that President Carter's campaign promise 'never' to normalize relations with the communist regime in Vietnam until a full accounting of our MIAs and POWs had been received was cynically ignored.

"I further note that an estimated 100,000 Vietnamese have been herded into concentration camps to be 're-educated'. (I wonder how their 'human rights' are being advanced?)"

mittee for twenty-five years. For nine of those years he was the Committee's Chief Counsel serving three distinguished Chairmen, U.S. Representatives Carl Vinson, L. Mendel Rivers and F. Edward Hebert. Within military circles, he is the acknowledged champion of the enlisted personnel and played a key role in the enactment of military pay and benefits increases during the L. Mendel Rivers era.

General Benade served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy from 1968 to 1976. In that position, he was the Pentagon's spokesman and Congressional witness on military personnel matters. Without a doubt, he is the most knowledgeable military personnel policy specialist in the country.

THE FRA'S PANEL will also include the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Delbert D. Black, USN (Ret.), the Association's National President, Thomas A. Heaney, USN (Ret.), its Junior Past National President, Joseph D. Morin, USN (Ret.) and Robert W. Nolan, USN (Ret.).

The **WHITE HATS' PAY PANEL** will go to three locations during the month of June: Charleston, South Carolina; the San Francisco Bay area; and Honolulu. At each location the panel will hold public hearings and personnel of all military services are invited to appear before the panel and present their views on such subjects as total compensation, contributory retirement, enlisted contracts, vested retirement, integration of social security and military retired pay, and pay and allowances.

The hearings will take place near but not on military bases so that 20 to 25 witnesses can be heard in a day. It is anticipated that the personnel of ships and shore stations will select their spokesman to appear before the pay panel. Thus, a broad spectrum of the enlisted

See FRA Pg. 11

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680
TELEPHONE 996-3100

June 27, 1978

UICC

Mr. Douglas Bradley
William G. Shannon & Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland

Dear Mr. Bradley:

On Wednesday, June 14 I attended an information session you Chaired at Truman College in Chicago. You invited the participants to share with you written statements concerning the impact of VA regulations and legislation on educational institutions. Enclosed you will find our response and hope that it will be of service to you.

Thank you for offering us the opportunity to present our views on these important matters.

Sincerely,

George M. Safford
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
Coordinator of Veterans Services

GMS:mds
Enclosure

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO CIRCLE
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
BOX 4348, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60680
TELEPHONE 996-3100

June 13, 1978

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE: STUDY OF VA REGULATIONS
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS - CHICAGO CIRCLE CAMPUS
REPORTING: GEORGE M. SAFFORD
ASSISTANT DEAN OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

In administering a "progress towards degree" regulation one must take into consideration the operating parameters of an institution of higher learning. At the University of Illinois - Circle Campus the following are important:

1) Enrollment of 21,000 students
2) 900 veterans certified for educational benefits
3) 8 colleges operating with relative automony from the rest of the campus
4) Centralized campus record keeping system as a data base with each college providing its own variations
5) Degree requirements vary with the curriculum and the college in which the veteran is enrolled.

It would appear that the legislation enacted by Congress regarding standards of progress as interpreted by the VA regulations would require all certifying officials to analyze each veteran's progress towards the degree. On our campus this process is performed routinely by each college on a continuing basis. Probation and drop rules are continually monitored via computer programs and reviewed by credential analysts in each college. As a student accumulates advanced status towards his degree some colleges review each student's accumulation of required courses and class sequences. Most colleges, however, do not monitor on a finely tuned basis but await a "final degree check" during the quarter prior to the student's actual completion of the degree. For many students this analysis comes too late and delays in earning the degree are common.

These matters are complex within each curriculum and college. [To assume that a certifying official has the time or staff, to say nothing of expertise, to be able to analyze the progress of each certified veteran is naive. To do a thorough job of monitoring standards of progress our campus is ill-equipped. We can perform some minimal checks and reviews that keep our campus in minimal compliance with the regulation.]

We assume that a student is acceptable to the VA for educational benefits if the student remains in acceptable status with his college on our campus. We dutifully notify the VA when the student is dropped for poor scholarship as defined by the college. In such cases the student is not maintaining adequate standards of progress for his degree.

However, we cannot attest as to whether or not a veteran is taking all of the required courses and sequences as to complete his degree. We assume that if this matter is important to the college, the student will be dropped for lack of progress and we will report it to the VA. If this is not important to the college, we will not be aware that the student may prolong his studies and will be unable, therefore, to report the circumstance to the VA.

If a student repeats a course, we will note the fact as the result of a manual review of each veteran's case file. This is an arduous, inefficient and costly process. It should be noted that many courses are repeatable for credit, but which ones are not known by the certifying official without researching each incident as it occurs.

We do not know when a student takes a non-required course.

In instances where a student withdraws from a course we have the ability to properly monitor such occurances and report circumstances to the VA. Provided our campus reports in a timely manner to the VA and the VA desires to pay or not to pay the student for that course and does not hold the University liable beyond timely reporting, our institution has no negative view of this policy.

We have similar predispositions with regard to "mitigating circumstances" in relation to unsatisfactory progress. These procedures do not require our campus to take unusual steps or burdensome administrative procedures to comply. It has been our experience that veterans who have legitmate mitigating circumstances have been dealt with fairly by the VA. For those students who have not been able to adequately document or explain their circumstances, overpayments have been established and we feel in a fair manner.

SEAT TIME:

Our campus is on the quarter system where a normal course is assigned four credit hours and meets for four hours per week. The level of difficulty of the course, outside assignments, lab and discussion sessions and the like are taken into account by the college in declaring the credit value of each course.. I believe the Congress and VA ought to take the college's definition of a course's value regardless of how many hours per week it may meet. Ninety to ninety-five per cent of the courses at our campus meet for the same number of hours per week as is granted in credit hours. The balance of the courses meet for shorter periods (four hours credit for three hours of meeting time) but the level of difficulty and scheduling requirements are taken into effect in these instances. We believe the VA should support the institutions judgment in these matters.

Attendance is not reported here and a system just for veterans would be expensive and discriminating.

RECORD KEEPING:

We are fortunate in that our campus has a combination of computer files, microfilm data and manual files which appear to meet all requirements of the VA's record keeping regulations. Over the last two years, however, we have had to "patch" our record keeping systems as VA regulations were changed. There is a continuing fear that newer regulations will eventually overpower our ability to keep up with the requirements. Already our record keeping is very inefficient and we have no capability of computerizing a separate veterans' record keeping system. The data is available, however, and although inefficient, we have found ways to access that data to perform the record keeping functions and reviews mandated by the VA. It should be understood that the administrative allowance provided by the VA does not cover but a small fraction of the actual cost of certifying veterans for educational benefits. There are too many procedures requiring bits and pieces of data which must be pulled together manually for reporting purposes. Inefficient and time-consuming record keeping functions inevitably cause delays in reporting to the VA thus increasing the institution's risk of incurring over-payment liabilities.

A suggestion in this area would be for the VA to provide packaged soft wear systems for institutions to use in their available computer hardware. For the University to assume the cost of implementing an effective computer system, support costs would have to be forth coming from the VA and a "stable environment" maintained for the record keeping function (i.e. limited or no regulatory changes).

SAFEGUARDS

We do not believe that wide spread abuse was ever evident at our campus. Certainly there have been individual cases where a veteran has taken advantage of the educational benefits program. However, legislation in the last two years has made such abuse difficult to achieve. We are supportive of efforts by Congress and the VA to eliminate abuse. However, regulations necessary to do this must be cognizent of the operating difficulties of institutions of higher learning. It may be valuable to determine in which type of institutions of higher learning various forms of abuse are experienced. Implementation of regulations should be more finely tuned to those operating environments so that the tasks can be done effectively and efficiently.

CATALOGS AND BULLETINS

At a large complex institution such as ours it is difficult to alter catalogs and bulletins. In our case we have discussed the regulatory requirements with the editors and inclusion of the necessary material has been made to the publications. However, advanced lead time of approximately twelve to eighteen months was needed in order to make larger scale changes to the publications and that amount of time was not available. As a result minor changes have been made to the publications to compromise action. We feel we are in compliance with the law on a minimal basis but wish that we could have had time to develop more meaningful copy for the publication to satisfy the full intent of the law.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A) Regulations: There is a need to more finely tune VA policies, procedures and regulations to the institutional groupings by kind. It is evident that operating necessities of universities and colleges experience a VA abuse rate far different from vocational schools and community colleges. If statistics bear out that statement, it would seem reasonable that policies and procedures should be designed for the type of institution where it will be most effective. This is especially true with respect to standards of progress regulations.

B) Legislation: There is a need for Congress to enact a vastly increased administrative allowance for institutions certifying veterans for educational benefits. At our campus costs run to about $25 per veteran per year whereas the actual administrative allowance is only a fraction of that figure. The result is that we "do from our hip pocket" what ought to be done thoroughly and carefully with the full support of management and data processing systems. Without such support compliance with regulations from the VA will be inefficiently implemented and processed. If administrative systems properly support the operations of the" certification function abuse will be curtailed, the VA will receive prompt notification from certifying institutions and the veterans should be better served by more prompt processing of their claims.

C) The educational benefits program has proved its usefullness. It should be continued and the voluntary system abolished. In addition, the limiting date ought to be extended from 10 years to 15 years with a looser definition of "mitigating circumstances" for veterans who are unable to use their benefits during the first 10 years following discharge from the service.

D) General: There is a need to shorten the processing time for initial claims for veterans who are just beginning to use their educational benefits. Currently it takes six to eight weeks for a veteran to receive his first benefit check. Processing time should be reduced to four or five weeks.

An additional recommendation would be to allow more flexibility and understanding in defining "mitigating circumstances" for institutions having difficulties with liability cases. Our experience has been that narrow vision has hampered understanding the true circumstances surrounding errors which caused overpayment cases.

MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
211 NORTH CARROLL, MADISON, WISCONSIN 53703 · 608 257-6711

Mr. Doug Bradley
165 Division Street
Madison, WI 53704

Dear Mr. Bradley:

June 9, 1978

Regarding your study of educational institution reaction to Standards of Progress and Seat Time Provisions, please note the following as it pertains to MATC.

Madison Area Technical College's Standards of Progress as dictated by the Veterans Administration requires reporting of unsatisfactory progress for two consecutive semesters of less than 2.00 work, for receipt of F's in all classes undertaken in a given semester, for withdrawal from classes undertaken in a given semester, and for accumulation of 13 credits or more of grade F.

Monitoring of veteran student enrollments is a time consuming task. As MATC's certifying official, I must expend approximately one month of each semester on SOP and related VA requirements. As a consequence, the reporting fees paid by the Veterans Administration for their required work is wholly inadequate.

Seat time provisions do not appear to affect MATC. All courses offered require one class session per week for each credit earned.

The record keeping requirements of the Veterans Administration is immense. The CPU at the college provides me with weekly cumulative withdrawal reports, biweekly alphabetical listings of individuals receiving veterans benefits, individual underclassman status reports, and individual semester grade reports. These data processing costs coupled with duplicating costs are absorbed by the college. One can only guess at the real dollar amount. Again, a realistic reporting fee is needed if colleges must continue to do VA business.

It seems to me the widespread abuse of taxpayer monies may not exist at this time. The VA perpetuated this problem with advance payment, prepayment, and continuous payment. What is the overpayment bill under postpayment and a modification of advance and continuous payment? As the old saying goes, why close the barn door after all the cows have left?

Catalogs and bulletins are updated regularly. All effort is made to make responsible personnel at the college aware of the ever changing VA regulations.

I recommend the government place more responsibility on the shoulders of the veteran student. The VA pays "lip service" to this concept of ultimate responsibility resting with the veteran; however, in reality this is not the case. Assessment of institutional liability for failure to report an adjustment in enrollment within 30 days of the effective date is a classic example. When was the last time VA processed anything within 30 days?

All Vocational Diploma program students must complete quarterly attendance verifications. Why not require standard college degree students to do so as well? Give this responsibility to the veteran student. If the verification is not completed and returned by the veteran the next monthly benefit check is not issued. If the veteran certifies his enrollment and subsequently the college reports an adjustment for the certified period, suspend this veteran's benefits.

Also, require veterans to submit copies of their grade reports directly to the local VA Regional Office. VA officials could then monitor satisfactory progress with complete confidence that some unscrupulous school official is not in collusion with his veteran students in "ripping off" the taxpayer.

In summary, Doug, more real responsibility must be placed upon the veteran and the Veterans Administration. It is not the responsibility of educational institutions to play the role of probation officer for the VA and, quite frankly, this is the role the government is casting for us.

Yours truly,

John R. Keller
Veterans Service Officer

MANKATO
STATE
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR/(507)389-6266

MANKATO, MINNESOTA 56001

June 27, 1978

Mr. Doug Bradley
Wm. G. Shannon & Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Bradley:

The following comments are offered as a result of your invitation during the June 12 meeting to submit in writing comments regarding the Veterans Administration and its relationship to Mankato State University. As Acting Registrar, I am responsible for the V.A. Benefits program and, therefore, I am significantly involved with the Veterans Administration.

I found that during the discussions of the June 12 meeting, many of our major concerns regarding the V.A. were also of great concern to the other institutions represented. Issues such as inconsistent enforcement of regulations, lack of representation from the institutions of higher learning on committees which develop regulations and guidelines, continual confusion resulting from frequent changes in policies, poorly written regulations which defy consistent interpretation, and the imposition of rigorous standards far in excess of other financial aid programs are some of the problems which nullify our efforts to administer a just and effective V.A. benefits program.

One of our major concerns has been the lack of consistent response by the V.A. regarding our requests for clear and accurate written interpretations of policies. This has been an area of great frustration to us as we have made every attempt to clarify procedures and policies but find, in fact, that the V.A., itself, cannot produce a clear definition and interpretation.

Attached, you will find some past correspondence to the V.A. which points out clearly some of our frustration (See Attachment A). The first letter (July 7, 1977) was sent to Mr. C. F. McDonald, Veterans Service Officer, St. Paul. The issue was the certification of short term courses. Previously, the University had received a letter from Mr. McDonald regarding this certification problem and, as a result, we had instructed our V.A. Certification Officer to certify all short term courses for their duration only. In speaking with our V.A. representatives on Campus, I was told there was a different interpretation regarding this policy and, that if a Veteran averaged one quarter hour per week during the 5-week Summer Session, he may be eligible for full time benefits for the full session. As a follow-up, I called the V.A. Regional Office in St. Paul and requested further clarification. I was told that the 5 hours per Summer Session was a guideline and that if a Veteran participated in that manner, he would probably receive full time benefits for the 5-week period. This statement supported the interpretation made by our Veterans representatives on Campus. Since there obviously was no clear understanding or consistency within the V.A., we were told simply to enter the information on the Certification form and the V.A. would make the interpretation.

I felt it necessary to write to Mr. McDonald to seek further clarification since the new interpretation given by the V.A. representatives was more lenient and advantageous to the Veteran. Therefore, I felt the University might become subject to school liability if we followed that interpretation. A month passed and there was no response to my letter. I wrote again to Mr. McDonald requesting clarification of certification policy. I attached a copy of my previous letter.

In the meantime, there was significant concern by the V.A. representatives on Campus, by the Veteran, and by the University staff that Veterans were not being allowed adequate benefits under the new interpretations. On August 15, Mr. McDonald responded stating the University was correctly certifying short term courses (for the duration of the course only).

On September 7 and 14, I wrote memos to the V.A. representatives on Campus informing them of Mr. McDonald's interpretation which required that we continue the certification of short term courses as we had previously and not under any new interpretation. Please study the attached correspondence and understand that we felt the need for a clear understanding of what the policies and guidelines of the V.A. really was. To date, we still do not have a clear understanding of how Veterans benefits are being paid for short term courses. It is our understanding that different adjudicators within the V.A. handle those certifications differently so there is no consistent application of policies.

This situation which I have described above points out several major problems. The first is the lack of clear, written guidelines on an important certification issue. There was no written regulation or guideline which the University or the V.A. representatives could refer to for clarification. I first consulted the various V.A. regulations I have on file. Not being able to find a regulation which addressed this issue, I conferred with the University's V.A. Certification Officer. She also was not able to point out the regulation and, therefore, called the V.A. representatives on Campus. They could not locate a regulation either and called the V.A. headquarters in St. Paul. There it was decided that V.A. regulation 14131B (see Attachment B) and V.A. Regulation 14135E (see Attachment C) were the regulations governing this issue. Nowhere in these regulations, however, was there any specific mention of short-term courses.

Secondly, there was not a timely response to my urgent letter requesting clarification. Thirdly, there was a difference of opinion between the Veterans Service Officer, his colleagues and the V.A. representatives on Campus. This produces a most difficult situation, not only for us, but for the V.A. representatives on Campus who are not provided adequate information.

It seems appropriate to use the regulations governing this issue to point out the potential for inconsistency found in the V.A. regulations. Regulation 14131B states that the commencing date for a course is "the date of registration, or the date of reporting where the student is required by published standards of the school to report in advance of registration but not later than the date the person first reports for classes. The commencing date is considered the first day of benefits." At our University, registration for last Spring quarter began on January 23, 1978. A Veteran could have registered and paid his tuition on that day for a five-day Workshop which would begin on the first day of Spring quarter, March 29th. Technically, and according to the only published V.A. regulation on this issue, the University could certify this student for the period of January 23 through April 4. This amounts to 71 days of benefits where in reality he should only be certified for five days. Taking a more realistic position, a student could register on January 23, as above, but not pay his tuition until the February 27 deadline. Since registration becomes official with the payment of tuition, his course commencement date could technically be recorded as February 27, and he could be certified for benefits from February 27 through April 4, a total of 37 days of benefits for a five-day Workshop. Obviously, this would not be an appropriate interpretation but could be applied under the existing rules and regulations.

In summary, I would state the following: ① The Veterans Administration has imposed many policies and guidelines upon the certifying institutions but has not provided reasonable or adequate interpretation of those guidelines. The expectation of technical compliance to non-technical guidelines produce an impossible condition for the institution. ② The Veterans Administration has not responded adequately to our requests for written interpretations which would become part of our policy guide. They have been slow in responding to written requests and the response has only been of a general nature. ③ The Veterans Administration has done little to inform the veteran V.A. representatives on Campus and certifying officials of changing guidelines. The institution has been forced to seek interpretation and to inform veterans in the form of written mailings of changing procedures and requirements. That should be the responsibility of the Veterans Administration. ④ The Veterans Administration has retroactively imposed regulations upon the institution, therefore, making it impossible to have complied with regulations which were non-existent at the time of certification.5)The Veterans Administration has made tremendous financial demands upon the institution as we have attempted to apply what we believe to be the rules and regulations. That kind of demand has not been placed on the institution by any other financial assistance program.

Mr. Doug Bradley
June 27, 1978
Page 4

In order for us to protect ourselves, in the absence of incomplete and inadequate guidelines and interpretations, we have submitted our policies and certification to the Veterans Administration for their knowledge and approval. It would seem, however, more appropriate if the Veterans Administration had published a guide containing concise rules and regulations to be followed by all Universities.

I have only outlined a small portion of the problems which we have had with the Veterans Administration in recent months. The Veterans Administration appears to be a poorly managed and poorly administered bureaucracy which is insensitive to the needs of the institution and the veteran. It would appear that this condition must be corrected if the Veterans Administration Benefits program is to be efficiently and adequately administered.

Please contact me if I can provide additional clarification or information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

R. Victor Swenson
Acting Registrar

RVS:ec

Attachments

cc: Dr. Een, Asst. Vice Pres., Academic Affairs
Mr. McMahon, Vice Pres., Resource Management

College of Marin - California

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
Regional Office
211 Main Street
San Francisco, California 94105

Date AUG 26 1977

In Reply Refer to 343/27

Mr. Steven L. Padover, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean, Student Services
College of Marin
Kentfield, CA 94904

Ms. Dorothy Starbuck, Chief Benefits Director has asked me to reply to your request for those Veterans Administration rules and regulations which affect the Marin Community College District.

We routinely mail pertinent VA publications to all institutions approved to train veterans. For several year now this material has been received at your school by Mrs. Jean Chandler, and her successor Mr. George [illegible]. I would sincerely appreciate your checking with these individuals to see if the publications you ask for are not already available to you. I ask this because, frankly, the job of assembling this material is a task of no small dimension.

Peter Reckas, our representative at the college, also is available to assist you. You may reach him at 485-9427.

R. F. Welch

R. F. WELCH
Director

[illegible]

RECEIVED
AUG 2[illegible] 1977
STUDENT SERVICES
COLLEGE OF MARIN

"To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan." — ABRAHAM LINCOLN

MONTEREY PENINSULA COLLEGE
980 FREMONT • MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA 93940 • TELEPHONE (408) 649-1150

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June 23, 1978

Mr. Tom Shay
California Community
and Junior College Assn.
2017 "O" Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Tom:

I was not able to attend the June 15 meeting with Dr. Shannon, but I would like to respond to the questions raised in the discussion guide that you sent to us. My comments are based on that outline.

1. Standards of Progress

Normal progress should be tied to institutional standards rather than on arbitrary standards developed by the VA. We do not have sufficient clerical help to monitor the VA standards. Abuse in this area has been controlled in the past by a limit on the time that a veteran has to use his/her benefits. Any system to monitor normal progress can be abused by those intent on such abuse.

The various schemes used for reporting dates of withdrawal and mitigating circumstances have resulted in a large amount of red tape, and no scheme seems to be workable in terms of timely and accurate reporting. Somehow this entire matter should become a total responsibility of the veteran rather than of the institution.

Appendix O is not compatible with institutional policy or procedure and would create an unmanageable work load.

2. Seat Time

This entire section is covered by California Ed Code and Title V provisions for community colleges. All VA policies should be based on what our requirements are by law. When we certify that a student is enrolled in 12 semester units or more, the assumption should be that the student is full-time even if the studept is not in a "classroom seat" for 12 sessions. Accreditation, state law, the Chancellor's Office, Department of Finance, and auditors set standards and monitor our so-called seat time. The DVB circular regulation on this should apply only to proprietary schools where abuses may exist and not to public community colleges where standards exist and are enforced.

(Continued)

3. Record Keeping

The veteran should be made totally responsible for reporting with the institution as a certifying agency only. Making institutions liable for money received by veterans is ridiculous. In public institutions, that only means that taxpayers end up paying twice for a veteran who abuses his/her benefits. Timely reporting is extremely difficult and time consuming.

4. Safeguards

We have little evidence of abuse of benefits by vets, but safeguards can be manipulated if the veteran is intent on abuse. The veteran should be clearly informed of VA rules and regulations, and the veteran should be responsible for living within the rules and regs.

5. Catalogs and Bulletins

I guess the regulation for turning a catalog into a state agency is all right, but one wonders why someone has to certify that it's true and correct. Also, the Bureau of School Approvals is not the appropriate agency for approving California community colleges--this should be done by the Chancellor's Office.

6. Recommendations

Our general recommendation is that responsibility and potential liability should be shifted from the institution to the veteran. Paperwork should be reduced to an absolute minimum.

Proposition 13 has taken away a significant amount of community college funds and makes it imperative that cost saving measures be taken in bureaucratic type matters. Since Proposition 13 will result in a large windfall of money for the federal government through increased income taxes resulting from lowered property tax deductions, it would be appropriate for the VA and the vet to handle more of the paperwork involved.

Tom, it seems to me that most of the VA laws and regulations are designed to control proprietary institutions. Then, the VA holds meetings with us suggesting ways we can get around such rules, but still holding us accountable. Couldn't California community colleges just be excluded from many of these regulations and have the Chancellor's Office certify compliance for all California community colleges?

Sincerely,

Jack D. Bessire
Dean of Student Personnel

JDB/px

cc: Sally Jones, MPC Registrar
Bob Faul, MPC President

OHLONE COLLEGE

MEMORANDUM

TO: DR. SHANNON, PRIVATE CONSULTANT TO CCJCA

Ollie Baylis

FROM: OLLIE BAYLIS, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES, OHLONE
COLLEGE (FREMONT), MEMBER OF VA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DENNIS PUTNAM, VETERANS PROGRAM COORDINATOR
OHLONE COLLEGE Dennis Putnam

DATE: JUNE 15, 1978

SUBJECT: VA REGULATIONS - "SEAT TIME" AND "SATISFACTORY PROGRESS"

Listed below are our suggestions for needed changes in VA regulations and related statues.

1. In regard to modifications of VA regulations and federal statutes concerning the VA, the nature and mission of California Community Colleges do not provide for easy compliance with most of the recent VA policies and procedures.

   a. Monitoring daily attendance of Veteran students impose unnecessary reporting procedures for Community College instructors since they are not required to monitor attendance each day. In order to accurately report the "last date of attendance in courses" to the VA, this would require daily attendance record keeping procedures by instructors for all Veteran students.

   b. California Community Colleges do not charge tuition fees. Each Community College has established a system for reporting necessary information to the VA in the best possible realm of capabilities. The responsibility for overpayments should not be imposed on California Community Colleges, but instead, the Veteran students should be liable.

   c. In addition to attempting to collect alleged overpayments from Community Colleges, the VA is concurrently collecting these alleged overpayments from Veteran students. Thus, the alleged overpayment amounts are inaccurate. It is recommended that the VA inform each Community College on a continuous basis of the amounts of alleged overpayments that had been collected from Veteran students.

   d. Attempts to implement all of the VA reporting procedures in Appendix "G" and Appendix "O" in a timely manner as requested by the VA, would establish a "discrimination procedure" whereby, Veteran students would be treated different than other students. This would in turn, create a situation whereby the VA would be establishing policies and procedures which would interfere with the "academic freedom" of California Community Colleges.

   e. Since the current VA regulations, policies, and procedures do not consider the uniqueness of the mission and mode of operation of California Community Colleges, it is recommended that all of the VA regulations, policies, and procedures be modified to make it possible for California Community Colleges to comply.

2. Regarding VA forms and reporting requirements, the 30-day reporting period policy is unreasonable because it is not always possible to report the changes in

Veterans students' academic statuses within the 30-day period. A 60-day reporting period is recommended, as it would be more reasonable to comply with.

3. State, district and College definitions and policies and procedures statements related to "seat time" regulations, "satisfactory progress" regulations and recordkeeping related to Veterans are as follows:

"Seat time" regulations___The "open door" policy of California Community Colleges assures free admission to anyone over 18, or otherwise determined to be capable to profit from education. There is a great deal of movement among students from part-time to full-time status and vice versa. In addition to the movements from part-time and full-time statuses, the flexibility of the open door policy permits temporary and permanent "drop-outs", "stop-outs", "stop-ins" statuses. Students are not required to complete courses and/or programs within specific time frames. Although certain courses and/or programs are designed to be completed within a certain time period; however, the length of time it actually takes an individual student is primarily left to the disgression of the individual student. Therefore, in consideration of the nature of the open door policy of California Community Colleges, it is not possible to comply with the monitoring of each Veteran student, term by term computation, as stipulated in Appendix "O".

b. Satisfactory progress regulations____Aligned with the open door policy of California Community Colleges, students are usually required to maintain a minimum grade point average in order to remain in College and be considered as making normal progress. Failure to maintain a minimum grade point average consequently results in students being disqualified and/or unable to graduate. The "satisfactory progress regulations" stipulated by the VA disregards the policies and procedures pertaining to satisfactory progress established by California Community Colleges. The establishing and monitoring procedures of satisfactory progress should remain the jurisdiction of the educational institutions.

c. Recordkeeping related to Veterans_____The proliferation of recordkeeping duties have imposed hardships on California Community Colleges in their attempts to comply with VA policies and procedures. The VA reporting fees are grossly inadequate.

4. Procedures used to assure that College catalogs are in compliance with VA regulations_____At the present time this procedure does not seem to impose hardships. However, the nature of this procedure actually interferes with the "academic freedom" of educational institutions.

lc

cc: Gary Gallery, Legal Counsel,
Chancellors's Office

RAMAPO
COLLEGE
OF NEW JERSEY

505 RAMAPO VALLEY ROAD • MAHWAH, NEW JERSEY 07430 • 201 – 825-2800

June 27, 1978

JUN 29 Recd

Mr. William Schultz
Rutgers University, College of Arts and Sciences
Office of Veterans Affairs
311 North Fifth Street
Camden, New Jersey 08102

Dear Bill:

I deeply regret the circumstances that prevented me attending the meeting with William B. Shannon and Associates at your institution on June 17th, but as you are well aware, there are many concerns that we must address ourselves to at the institutional level.

The following information I submit to you for possible presentation to Mr. Shannon and his group.

1. Standards of Progress - Each institution has been reviewed by an accredidation team and must work within the guidelines established by the state in which they exist. Certifying officials at each institution have prepared and presented to the V.A. through the State Approving Agency their standards of progress outlining procedures and controls to be used regarding veterans enrolled at said institutions. For the most part standards to which veterans must comply are more stringent than those established for the general student population, resulting in a double standard in the institution.

"Section 1780 (A) (4) of Title 38 USC prohibiting payment of benefits to veterans for those courses in which the grade assigned is not used to compute the requirements of graduation" is a prime example of the V.A.s unwillingness to understand the academic policies that have been established at many institutions. Although DVB Circular 20-76-84 Appendix M which sets forth the guidelines for this regulation clearly states mitigating circumstances which may be judged to be out of the student's control, therefore precluding repayment to the V.A. for said courses, in reality there is little or no consistency regarding the use of these guidelines from one regional office to another. This same situation holds true regarding unsatisfactory progress as outlined in DVB Circular 20-76-84 Appendix O and Appendix O Revised. It would appear as though the V.A. has no true link with reality. They view patterns of enrollment as being cut and dried. Progress as viewed by the V.A. marches to a constant cadence when truly we all march to the beat of a different drum.

In many cases veterans are married and domestic problems tend to conflict with our academic performance. Concerns for work and requirements placed on them by work also tend to detract from a student's academic performance. Difficulty with course work or the insensitivity of an instructor may play heavily on whether or not a student progresses satisfactorily. Although these externalities affect the progress and rate thereof a veteran may have regarding his academic pursuits, Public Law 95-202 allows only 10 years from date of separation to completion of education.

In light of this information I strongly suggest that the V.A. recognize the legitimacy of academic policies as they exist at institutions and work with such institutions to ensure that veterans receive the optimum use of their benefits, as opposed to conducting witch hunts at institutions to uncover frivolous veterans.

2. Record Keeping - Our institution has devised a method by which it can monitor the academic performance of veterans on a semester by semester basis. Counseling through our office in conjunction with counseling through the academic advisement system helps us to advise veterans of problems as they arise regarding their progress and course selections. Although we have a non-punitive grading system, our office receives a grade list at the end of each semester which flags courses where no grade was assigned with an asterisk. Another report reflects cumulative credits and credits attempted during that semester. This, coupled with a veterans enrollment history, allows us to produce an academic profile for each veteran enrolled at our institution (copies of this information are enclosed).

3. Seat Time - This argument does not take into account the decline in the younger college student who will attend during traditional enrollment periods, i.e. daytime courses. The trend in higher education appears to be one for attracting the non-traditional student with marketing approaches such as TV and class combination courses, Saturday and Sunday programs and numerous variations that would allow those veterans and other students who would otherwise be unable to attend an institution of higher learning to attend and over a period of time receive a degree in the area of their interest.

4. Safeguards - It is my experience that much of the loss in taxpayers' monies is due in fact to the time lag in processing and response that occurs at the Veterans Administration.

Example No. 1 - As of 3/20/78 there were 30 veterans who had been terminated from our institution but were still receiving checks under the facility code assigned to our institution. 1999bs terminating these individuals were submitted no later than February 15th. As of April 1 there were still 7 individuals receiving checks under our facility code who had been terminated or were not enrolled at our institution.

Example No. 2 - The flow of paper work for the average veteran is as follows:

1. Certification by means of 22-1999
2. Verification by means of 1999V
3. Notification of change by means of 1999b
4. Notification of enrollment history by means of 6553a. -

Each institution receives a master record print out of all veterans eligible for benefits at their institution giving the remaining entitlement at the end of the enrollment period. If the aforementioned could be consolidated into one document that could be presented to the V.A. at enrollment time, a copy thereof returning sometime during the semester or academic year for verification of enrollment, credit load, cumulative credits and also providing the institution with the information that appears on the veteran's award letter, the task faced by the Veterans Administration and the institution would be simplified.

It is my firm belief that although there may be abuses within the framework of the G.I. Bill as it is used by veterans, these abuses are minimal when compared with those of other governmental agencies.

In closing I must sincerely say that our attention as veterans coordinators appears to be turning towards the playing of political games and away from service to the veteran and his needs.

As you are aware, I have spoken out on several occasions regarding the plight of veterans and have responded to every offer that I have been made aware of regarding the feasibility of this transfer of authority to the V.A. Many hours and dollars have been expended on a decision that can be made based on performance alone. It is my sincere hope that this decision will be swift in coming for regardless of the outcome it my intent to remain the veteran's advocate.

Sincerely,

Samuel H. Burch
Director of Veterans Affairs

SB/asf

Richard J. Daley College
7500 South Pulaski Road
Chicago, Illinois 60652
(312) 735-3000

Responses to the Selected Topics for Discussion,
Veterans Benefits Regulations,
William G. Shannon & Associates,
Truman College, Chicago, Illinois
June 14, 1978

---

1. Standards of Progress

   a. Standards of progress more stringent than those applied to non-veteran students should not be required of veteran students. In particular, the length of time needed to complete any program of study (within the limits of the delimiting date) should not be a factor in determining the continuing eligibility of a veteran for GI Bill benefits. A satisfactory cumulative grade-point average should be considered far more important. In addition, the institution should not consider the veteran student to be making unsatisfactory progress when 12 to 14 hours of F-grade have been recorded if the overall GPA is within the acceptable limits specified by that institution.

   b. The major measure of satisfactory progress for non-veteran students at our institution is the grade-point average.

   c. We feel that a student should not receive VA benefits for courses in which the grade assigned is not used to compute the requirements for graduation; this includes W-grades indicating a course from which a student has withdrawn.

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(312) 735-3000

d. The mitigating circumstances listed in DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix O, Revised paragraph 9, appear reasonable.

2. Seat Time

Credit hours and not class sessions should be the important consideration here. The definition of credit hours should take into consideration the amount of study time needed as well as the hours spent in class.

a. The minimum full time course load at our institution is 12 credit hours.

b. See 2c.

c. One credit hour = 37.5 in-class hours plus 75 hours study time/semester.

3. Record Keeping

a. The record keeping requirements are for the most part reasonable; however, the time allowed for reporting changes in student status should be extended to at least 60 days.

b. Yes.

c. We are not familiar with the accounting techniques that we may or may not share with other institutions.

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(312) 735-3000

4. Safeguards

   a. The extent of abuse has been minimal since veteran students at our institution must carefully follow the specific curriculums listed in our catalog for each degree objective. Also, with the prompt reporting of non-punitive grades to the VA, there is a strong incentive for students to perform well in their course work. (Students not meeting the minimum GPA requirements of the College are also reported.)

   b. We feel that the current VA regulations are more than adequate in preventing the abuse of veterans' benefits.

5. Catalogs and Bulletins

   a. In general, they are reasonable.

   b. Similar procedures are more than likely used by many institutions.

6. Recommendations

   Several changes could be made that would benefit the veteran student.

   a. Regulations: Changes in the standards of progress should be made. See 1a. Also the veteran student should be able to change his or her program of study more than once without VA counseling.

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(312) 735-3000

b. Legislation: The 10-year delimiting date should be abolished.

c. Veterans: Yes, the modified regulations and legislation would benefit students.

d. General: The VA should have workshops to clarify VA regulations to persons at the institutional level dealing with veterans' affairs. The VA should also provide more information to the institutions regarding their decisions on mitigating circumstances for students from those institutions; see 1d. Also, the reporting fee should be increased to realistically reflect the cost to the institution of complying with the various VA policies and procedures.

Eric Pettersen
Veterans' Coordinator

San Francisco State University
1600 HOLLOWAY AVENUE • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94132

June 12, 1978

To Whom It May Concern:

This is in response to SA 78-47 concerning Veterans Administration regulations on "standards of progress".

For Spring 1978, there are 1621 certified veterans enrolled at San Francisco State University. The attached Fall 1978 admissions report indicates the geographic distribution of applicants, however, this information is not recorded for veterans only. The following information reflects the number of veterans certified for benefits by this University.

	Fall 1977 All Students	Fall 1977 Veterans	Spring 1978 Veterans
Full-time undergraduates	11,969	984	1017
3/4 time undergraduates	2,439	157	137
1/2 time undergraduates	2,024	207	218
less than 1/2 time undergraduates	1,316	-	-
Total Undergraduates	17,748	1348	1372
Total Graduates	6,267	229	249
Total Grad and Undergrad	24,035	1577	1621

One impact of the Veterans Administration's provisions for "standards of progress" is that they actually require a change in this institution's definition of satisfactory progress. It is possible for a student to maintain a high grade point average while at the same time accumulating 12 to 14 units of failing grades. Even though failing grades are earned, it may be possible for a student to maintain total unit progress toward the degree through heavier course loads during the regular semesters or through summer session enrollment. Therefore, it should not be assumed that accumulation of failing grades necessarily means lack of satisfactory progress toward a degree.

The "standards of progress" regulations require the school to report when it is determined that a student will need an additional term to complete the program. This regulation is not fully explained. If it is read literally, it could be interpreted as requiring a detailed, periodic evaluation which is not provided to other students. General Studies and major course evaluations would be required from the various department advisors and department chairpersons, and statutory requirement evaluations would be required from the graduation evaluators. This would be time consuming and difficult to control. These evaluations would be complicated by the problems of course scheduling, emphases changes, and approved requirement substitutions.

I recommend that the legislation and/or regulations be changed to require standards of progress according to the criteria of the institutions in attendance by the veterans. The same academic standards are required of veterans as are required of all undergraduates enrolled at this institution. At the end of Spring 1977, San Francisco State University disqualified 55 veterans who had been certified for benefits; this is 4% of those veterans enrolled for that term. Three percent of all undergraduate students enrolled for Spring 1977 were disqualified.

Nancy C. Sprotte
Nancy C. Sprotte
Student Services and
Records Officer

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE

OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

TO: Dr. Glenn G. Gooder

FROM: Al Silvers

DATE: June 12, 1978

SUBJECT: Response to William G. Shannon and Associates

1. Standards of Progress - Acceptable to this college; however, the expense of staff and materials is something we feel should be shared by the VA.

2. Seat Time - Prefer straight accounting for 12 units per semester versus 12 class sessions per week, but we can live with present method. The former would serve students better.

3. Record Keeping - In light of Proposition 13 and the lack of VCIP funds, etc., VA requirements are costly and, therefore, difficult. Unless VA wants to share the cost of record keeping and reporting, the VA should not lay first claim on computer or staff time.

   No comment on "good accounting system."

4. Safeguards - Currently little, if any, problem as a result of standards of progress reports and withdrawal/payment policies. Maintain standards of progress requirements. Fund colleges to do work that VA should do.

5. Catalogs and Bulletins - This college complies with all legal requirements, but the practice of interfering with the internal affairs of an institution to serve another agency's peculiar needs is deplorable. The VA should accept responsibility for keeping its clientele informed of its activities and regulations.

6. Recommendations - See above comments.

ALS/mjm

Santa Clara College
Calif.

VETERANS:

A new procedure is being adopted for use at ______________________ College for the certifying of veterans.

The new requirement is as follows:

> Once each month, each veteran desiring to continue his receipt of benefits from the Veterans Administration shall certify at the college Veterans Office that he has not changed his enrollment status since his last monthly declaration of enrollment, or, if none, since his original certification of enrollment.

Because some veterans have defrauded the Veterans Administration of thousands of dollars and because the Veterans Administration seeks reimbursement from the college as well as the veteran, we have been compelled to establish this new requirement.

The primary responsibility for reporting changes in enrollment lies with the veteran. Since the Veterans Administration has not been able to obtain the prompt prosecution by the United States Attorney's Office of veterans who fail to report changes of status and who continue to receive undeserved benefits, it has become necessary for the college to take action to make veterans who commit fraud subject to the penal laws of the State of California. Under this new procedure, the college will be able to quicky prosecute those veterans who obtain benefits by fraud.

In the event that the veteran does not make the certification, the Veterans Administration will be informed that the veteran has terminated his enrollment at the college. If, after a termination, a veteran properly declares his enrollment as required by this rule and his declaration is substantiated, the Veterans Administration will be so informed. We note, however, that it is likely that a delay in payment of benefits will occur due to the administrative procedures of the Veterans Administration.

The declaration may be made at any time during the calendar month. We would recommend that you take this required action early in the month in order to obtain prompt service.

We apologize for this inconvenience to the vast majority of veterans who have complied with the reporting requirements of the Veterans Administration and regret the necessity of adopting this additional requirement.

Very truly yours,

11

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
REGIONAL OFFICE
211 MAIN STREET
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94105

Date [illegible] 1977

Reply refer to: 343/27

Mr. Paul J. Mason, Deputy County Counsel
County of Santa Clara
County Government Center, East Wing
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, California 95110

The provisions of Section 1674 of Title 38, U.S.C., were effective December 1, 1976. This part of the law was implemented by the issuance of Appendix O to DVB Circular 20-76-84. We did not mail this circular to schools because the requirements seemed to conflict with current regulations and needed clarification on treatment of part-time students. Nonetheless, these requirements are in force and should be implemented. We certainly do not wish to require schools to incur unnecessary administrative expense. Therefore, we are awaiting the revision to the appendix which will simplify the methods for determining "length of course." All educational institutions will be notified of any revisions when they are distributed.

You have indicated there is a real possibility that the six colleges in Santa Clara County (Foothill, De Anza, San Jose City, Evergreen, West Valley and Gavilan), may discontinue their involvement in certifying veteran enrollment, if Appendix O is implemented. We are, therefore, forwarding a copy of this letter to Veterans Administration Central Office for consideration. We hope officials of these institutions submitted suggestions or comments to the Administrator on this issue under the procedure provided for proposed changes published in the Federal Register.

Your interest and continued cooperation is sincerely appreciated.

R F Welch
R. F. WELCH
Director

Ex [illegible]

Show veteran's full name, VA file number, and social security number on all correspondence

Santa Clara College
Calif.

DECLARATION OF ENROLLMENT

I hereby declare that I am enrolled in ____________ units at the present time. This number of units is:

☐ The same number of units which I stated in my last monthly declaration or, if no previous declaration, in my original certification.

☐ Not the same number of units which I previously declared, and, therefore, I will follow other procedures to report this change to the college.

I further declare that I am complying with the attendance requirements of my instructors, and that I am making a good faith effort to make satisfactory progress in my classes.

I further declare that I understand that the college, in reliance on this declaration, continues my certification of enrollment with the Veterans Administration, and, that if this declaration was not made, my certification for benefits would be rescinded with the result that my Veterans Administration benefits would be terminated.

By this declaration, I knowingly subject myself to the penal laws of the State of California.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above statement is true and correct.

Dated at ______________________________, California on ________________.

____
(Name)

APPROVED AS TO FORM BY THE OFFICE
OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA

____
Paul J. Mason
Deputy County Counsel

CALIFORNIA

RECORDINGKEEPING RELATED TO VETERANS

The following is the procedure of recordkeeping at Santa Monica College.

A complete record of all paperwork done on a Veteran is kept in a file cabnet, including V. A. forms, DD214, and transcripts of all college work.

A quick and ready card file reference to show at a glance the complete enrollment history of a Veteran.

A daily computer printout of changes made by a Veteran in his classes.

Timely submission of IBM cards to the data processing center at the V.A. for all students receiving V.A. benefits.

At the end of each semester we submit the names of Veterans on a 1999B, who have received W's as a final grade.

Certification of new Veterans on a 1990 V. A. form.

Certification of continuing veteran on a Pinfeed or 1999.

Reporting of any changes on a daily basis on V.A. form 1999B.

Reporting of any veteran on V. A. form 1995 of any change of school or program.

Reporting of any change of address on form 572.

Reporting of any change in Marital Status on form 686C.

Concurrent enrollment on V. A. form 315.

All of which are attached.

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO STUDY ON VETERANS STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

It is the position of Santa Monica College and perhaps the position of many other higher educational institutions that veterans should be held to some reasonable standards of progress. Further, there should be some reasonable reporting procedures that higher educational institutions could abide by in reporting a veterans attendance or change of program to the Veterans Administration.

Santa Monica College, as well as perhaps most other higher educational institutions, would recommend that there be a change in the regulations thereby making a change in legislation in dealing with veterans standards of progress. The new regulations should be reasonable in nature and not so complicated that it would cost the higher educational institutions time and money in order to comply.

This new legislation and reporting procedure that Santa Monica College proposes would be beneficial to the College, to the veteran and to the Veterans Administration. Perhaps the general public would be benefited most of all in that it would eliminate costly reporting requirements.

__Proposals__

Santa Monica College proposes the following procedures be considered as general guidelines for standards of progress:

1. Each higher educational institution would report a veterans registration, class load (half, three-quarters or full time) and any resulting change of the veterans enrollment status to the Veterans Administration within 30 days.
2. Each semester a veteran would be required by the higher education institution to have the program approved according to the veterans major and transfer goal. All students beyond 60 completed units would require a special letter from a community college.

Proposals (cont'd)

3. The regulations regarding withdrawals and the repayment of any moneys received within that semester having to do with that withdrawal should remain in effect.
4. Mitigating circumstances regarding a veterans withdrawal should be used as an exception to the repayment regulation but be so decided at the Veterans Administration Office.
5. Standards of progress as so defined in the catalog of a higher educational institution should be so accepted by the Veterans Administration if these standards are reasonable to the goals of the higher educational institution.
6. Since most higher educational institutions have standards of progress, the Veterans Administration can be so advised of any veteran put on a probationary standing when failing to meet what the institutions so determine as satisfactory progress. As an example, Santa Monica College has academic probationary standing based on falling below a "C" average, as well as an excessive withdrawal-lack of progress probationary policy.
7. When the Veterans Administration is appropriately notified upon a student's lack of progress, the Veterans Administration could determine a reasonable length of time for a student to remove himself herself from a probationary standing. Again, mitigating circumstances could be applied, in order for the Veterans Administration to determine an exception to unsatisfactory progress.

GAN:td
6/14/78

2100 Moorpark Avenue
San Jose, California 95128
(408) 298-2181

San José City College

Dr. Theodore I. Murguia
President

San Jose Community College District
Board of Trustees
John R. Brokenshire
Gael Douglass
Dr. John E. Marlow
Virginia Sandoval
Yancy L. Williams

Otto Roemmich
District Superintendent

TO: Mr. William G. Shannon and Associates
FROM: Martin Roberts, Office of Veterans Affairs
RE: Veterans Administration Standards of Progress
Comments and Recommendations
DATE: June 13, 1978

Any discussion dealing with the VA definition of standards of progress must ultimately relate to Appendix M and O. Thus, the following discussion will be ordered along those lines.

Appendix M

Generally, this appendix prohibits payment for courses not used in computing graduation requirements. In addition, payments are prohibited for any course in which the student withdraws unless there are acceptable mitigating circumstances causing the withdrawal.

Central to this issue is the definition of non-punitive grades. San Jose City College had one definition of non-punitive grades and the VA had another. When Appendix M was first implemented any grade that was not averaged into the overall GPA or was not used in computing graduation requirements was considered non-punitive. However, using the college's definition of probation and disqualification, it was entirely possible to disqualify a student for receipt of "non-punitive" grades. For example, a student may be disqualified from school if the student receives two semesters of "W" grades. See Attachment #2.

This contradiction was solved when the VA (San Francisco) expanded its definition of exactly what constitutes a non-punitive grade. Grades which result in probation or disqualification are punitive, regardless of whether they are averaged into the overall GPA or are used in determining graduation requirements. Thus, Appendix M has become a workable document and is consistent with school policy. See Attachment #3.

In sum, the college can comply with the requirements of Appendix M and the additional costs to the district of reporting veterans who receive non-punitive grades is negligible.

RECOMMENDATIONS--Appendix M

It is recommended that the veteran be better informed by the VA concerning receipt of non-punitive grades. Because of a two or three month lag in reporting, and if mitigating circumstances are not a factor, veterans receive "short" checks up to 4 to 5 months after the non-punitive grade is reported. Because of this lag, veterans are sometimes hard-pressed for a reason for the "short" check. Investigation of transcripts will usually turn up the reason, but this investigation would not be necessary if the veteran can be notified of the reduction and the reason for the reduction by the VA.

Appendix O

Basically, Appendix O states that students must maintain satisfactory progress in order to continue to be eligible to receive veterans benefits. In this sense, satisfactory progress is loosely defined as the ability to graduate within the approved length of the course--based on the training time paid by the VA. Quite frankly, there are numerous problems associated with this definition.

Students attending community colleges rarely follow and/or complete a course of study. Exploration is the rule rather than the exception. Thus, it is entirely possible that a student may need to complete more than the 60 units required for an Associate of Arts Degree because the student took non-required courses at the beginning of his or her college career. Under Appendix O, a report of unsatisfactory progress would have to be filed because there is an extension of training time beyond the approved length of the course (60 units). It is entirely possible, however, that progress is satisfactory as defined by the school.

Obviously, the VA feels that there is a relationship between "satisfactory progress" and "course of study". The relationship is a valid one only when you consider that a student in order to graduate must satisfactorily complete a course of study prescribed by the school. The relationship becomes invalid when you consider the fact that a student need not be following a prescribed course of study to be progressing satisfactorily. I believe this confusion is central to the problems schools are having in implementing Appendix O.

Initially, Appendix O was resisted by the colleges and universities because in order to comply with Appendix O, additional monitoring and reporting unsatisfactory academic progress as defined by the individual institution. The revised edition of Appendix O, although somewhat less restrictive and complex than previous editions, still requires the school to monitor progress over and above what is required by the individual college even though the college qualified for a waiver under Appendix O guidelines. (Example: A veteran accumulates 13 units of punitive grades but still is in good standing with the school. The school must report that progress is unsatisfactory. We would not normally be able to do this unless we were monitoring grades each semester and keeping a cumulative record.)

This monitoring will impose a financial hardship on the intitution. Initial programming costs to enable the school to keep a cumulative record and estimated to exceed $2,000 for the first year. Clerical time is estimated to cost $600 each semester. These costs are over and above what is normally done by the school to insure that the already existing standards are being enforced.

Lastly, when considering mitigating circumstances in relation to Appendix O, certain circumstances must be considered. Paragraph 4a (Appendix O) states "If further training is required to complete the program (after the veteran has already received a full-time equivalent of punitive grades) the student's progress must be reported as unsatisfactory. Mitigating circumstances will be considered at this point." Two possibilities exist:

1) Progress at this point may not be considered unsatisfactory under school requirements.

2) It is entirely possible that the punative grades received by the vet may have occured at the beginning of the veteran's degree program. Thus, reporting of mitigating circumstances at the time the progress becomes unsatisfactory (based on VA definition) may have no bearing on the actual cause.

Resolution of the problems inherent within Appendix O rests with the ability of the VA and the college to agree upon a fundamental definition of "satisfactory progress" and "course of study". Obviously, this has not taken place.

A report of unsatisfactory progress based on an accumulation of punitive grades totalling 12 or more units is arbitrary and will not fit with the school's existing standards of academic performance. Ideally, what must take place is the successful marrying of the two definitions so that a school's academic policy is consistent with VA interpretation.

RECOMMENDATIONS--Appendix O

1) Appendix O should be implemented only if there is an absense of standards of progress within an institution. Where standards of progress exist, the institution must assure the VA that enforcement of these standards which includes reporting of unsatisfactory progress (disqualification) takes place.

2) Reference to "course of study" should be eliminated. As stated earlier, students rarely pursue a strict course of study. It is recommended that students who complete 60 units at a 2 year school operating on a semester system and still have 12 or more units remaining for graduation be labelled as "excess unit" students. These students would then have to pursue classes speciffically relating to their major. They would not be deemed as making unsatisfactory progress as soon as they reached 72 semester units unless, of course, they were found to be making unsatisfactory progress according to school standards. A form of this procedure is currently in operation and is very successful.

3) If the above recommendations were followed, the school would only have to monitor a veteran/students record once at the end of each semester. Such a monitoring is already being done for unsatisfactory progress and for Appendix M, thus there is not a real added expense. However, if Appendix O were implemented clerical monitoring would not only have to be done for that current semester but also for each successive semester beginning with the Spring 1977 semester. A cumulative record showing punitive grades would have to be kept and monitored and that record would have to be updated each semester. This record would be in addition to the official transcript published by the school at the end of each semester.

Quite simply, if the monitoring of satisfactory progress (Appendices M and O) can be started and completed at the end of each semester--and thus eliminate the need for an additional cumulative grade report—the problems relating to Appendix O can be solved.

SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SANFORD, FLORIDA 32771 **(305) 323-1450**

July 30, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon, President
Wm. G. Shannon and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Bill

Dear ~~Dr. Sh~~annon:

Because of the time element allowed by your study deadline and because of the holiday delay in the mail, I am enclosing a copy of a letter my supervisor wrote expressing our objection to the "Verification of Pursuit Cards (22-6553)."

The cards cause more chance for error than for improvement as the enclosures show.

This is in response to your request for inputs in paragraph 8.3) Record Keeping.

Sincerely,

Paul

Paul E. Jenkins
Veteran's Advisor

PEJ:kk

Enclosure

SEMINOLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SANFORD, FLORIDA 32771

(305) 323-1450

Dean of Student Development

October 7, 1976

Mr. Carlos L. Rainwater
Chairman, Vietnam Veterans Civic Council
Veterans Administration, Regional Office
St. Petersburg, Florida

Dear Mr. Rainwater, Carlos

I am not at all sure if there is anything the council can do to offer any relief for the ever increasing amount of verification of enrollment certification required by the Veterans Administration. The present cost in manhours for accurate compliance is next to prohibitive. I am appealing to the Florida and National Associations of Veterans Program Administrators also, as I realize the checks, cross-checks, and triple checks imposed are not generated at the regional office level.

To date we have adequate and concise instructions, guidelines, and workshops for the proper submission of the enrollment certification (22-1999), as well as the provision for changes via the 22-1999b. This is augmented by current notice of School Liability, as an encouragement for accuracy.

The requirement for the submission of the 1999v when the Veteran receives his advance pay, to verify if the student is in fact enrolled for what was certified on the 1999 or 1990, is understandable. Twice a year a print-out is returned for further verification of enrollment , even if the school has been submitting 1999b's accurately and in a timely manner. Finally there comes two or three "Verification of Pursuit cards (22-6553)" per Veteran, per year. Many of these duplicate and overlap time periods, as is indicated by my enclosure. Each one of these methods for re-verifying enrollment besides being costly, time consuming, and redundant; offer yet another opportunity for error both human and machine.

It was recently suggested by the Chief, Education Service Unit that work-study personnel be utilized for verification projects such as the print-out corrections, however the school certifying official's signature is required and the school is responsible for the accuracy of the report.

Otherwise things look very good for another year of representing and serving the Veterans of Florida.

Sincerely,

Buddy
J. A. Williams
Coordinator of Veterans Affairs

JAW/sm

South Oklahoma City College

National Association of Concerned Veterans

Mid American Region
C/O 7777 S. May
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73159

June 28, 1978

William Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

At the recent NACV Board of Director's meeting in San Francisco you requested additional input concerning your study. The following is a run down on the letter you handed out at the meeting.

1. Standards of Progress

   A. How South Oklahoma City Junior College measures student progress: see page 17 of College Bulletin-This policy is in line with the State Regents recommended minimum policy.

   B. How does South Oklahoma City Junior College view the policy of not paying benefits on a course not used to compute graduation, including withdrawals.

      The current policy is acceptable as long as "mitigating circumstances" allows for any reasonable situation that may cause a veteran to cease attendance before completion of the course.

   C. How does South Oklahoma City Junior College feel about mitigating circumstances as described in 0 Revised, para. 9.

      Here again if the mitigating circumstances allow for reasonable consideration of the circumstance, the regulation is acceptable.

2. Seat Time

   A. What do you consider an appropriate definition of "full time".

      According to VA formula:

$$\frac{\text{18 X Credit hours}}{\text{no. of weeks for the course}}$$

      This institution considers 12 hours in a 16 week session as full time.

   B. How do you maintain records of class time?

Instructors maintain attendance and progress on every student. At the end of each 4 weeks of a session attendance and progress is turned in on a computer listing. This information is distributed to various interested offices (ex. VAO, Financial Aid)

C. Upon what basis do you assign credit relative to seat time?

State Regents policy: The minimum scheduled meeting time for one semester credit hour should not be less than 12½ clock hours. In a sixteen week session a one hour credit course should meet one session of 50 (fifty) minutes per week. A laboratory related course should be scheduled for a total of twenty-eight (28) contact hours for one semester credit hour. A combination of lecture and lab scheduling should be prorated accordingly.

3. Record Keeping

A. What are your comments regarding the VA's record keeping requirements?

This institution has no problem with these requirements. It is however very helpful to have forms with carbons and a copy for the school's records, particularly with the low reporting fee.

B. Do you utilize computers in your record keeping? If not, does this cause a problem?

South Oklahoma City Junior College is "on line". Our enrollment, attendance and progress reporting and veteran status and delimiting date is on our computer system.

South Oklahoma City Junior College has a good record keeping system and because of the size is able to maintain up to date records. Larger institutions would have a big problem maintaining a comprehensive system like ours.

4. Safeguards

A. What is your institutions conception of the extent of abuse resulting from progress and measurement criteria?

As with a program that involves money there is going to be some abuse, however, the amount of overpayments still outstanding is highly over publicized. The percentage of veterans who make good use of the program is never brought to light. I feel there needs to be safeguards but in most cases (especially in IHL's) the institutions policy should be adequate.

One of the biggest problems the VA is facing is the intitutional attitude. When constant changes are made because of an over reaction by Congress and/or the VA the schools te[illegible] sit back and wait because it will change before the procedure can be implemented.

In the meantime the veteran sincerely seeking an education is penalized because of the laws and regulations.

If you need additional information or have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Pam Davenport
Regional Director

PJD/csc

Enclosure

cc: Mike Wooley
State Accrediting Agency

STUDENT ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

June 14, 1978

Dr. William G. Shannon
c/o Wm G. Shannon and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

This letter is written pursuant to our meeting at The USUC Offices on June 13, 1978.

First of all, I believe that the Veterans Administration is fortunate to have you conduct this study. Your understanding of the problems and your approach to their resolution are refreshing.

Secondly, the answers to your questions are as follows:

1. The University of Southern California, a private independent University, enrolls more than 24,000 students. FTE is approximately 16,000. There are 1,000 veterans on campus and 3,000 in-service personnel receiving VA benefits off-campus. These off-campus students are graduate students seeking advanced degrees at many military installations throughout the world, mostly overseas.
2. Our University is complying with the two issues discussed: Standards of progress and seat time. This compliance is not without extra effort and time, and the Los Angeles Regional Office has registered no complaints against our procedures.
3. My recommended changes in the legislation and/or regulations are attached.

You have my very best wishes for a successful completion of your project.

Very truly yours,

Conrad Wedberg, Jr., Director
University Relations

cc: James Jones
Susan Hunter

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, UNIVERSITY PARK, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90007

RECOMMENDED CHANGES

The Veterans Administration and educational institutions across the land are spending millions of dollars in their attempts to monitor regulations designed to assure that the money advanced to veterans is properly utilized. As a result, we are all plagued with the multitude of idiosyncracies involving progress rather than the simple concept of completion.

The following complications, to mention a few, result from monitoring the numerous details of enrollment and attendance:

Overpayments
Standards of Progress
Completion of Degree Requirements
Grades, punitive and non-punitive
Attendance records
Withdrawals and Cancellations
Compliance
Liability
Administrative Costs
Counseling on Mitigating Circumstances

It seems to me that most - if not all - of these complications could be removed if the system were changed to a reimbursement plan, whereby the veteran would receive benefits according to certified transcripts of completed studies each term. Under this plan, the typical veteran would have to obtain considerable financial assistance during his first term in school, but that is what Financial Aid Offices are for.

I thoroughly understand that patching existing legislation is the style and that drastic change is virtually impossible. However, in view of the burgeoning "tax-payer revolt," the time may be ripe for complete overhaul.

Veterans educational benefits should be re-constituted as follows:

I. ELIGIBILITY - According to years of military service

One year provides:	600 hours of instruction
Two years provide:	1200 hours of instruction
Three or more years provide:	1800 hours of instruction

II. STIPENDS - According to hours of instruction

Veterans should be reimbursed (not paid during their enrollment periods) at the rate of $5.84, the current rate, or perhaps $6 per hour of instruction. Congress should decide the appropriate amount, of course. The table on the following page provides the data.

Reimbursement checks, in the amounts suggested in the table, would be mailed by the Veterans Administration to the veteran upon receipt of official transcripts from the institution attended. Reimbursements would be made ONLY for courses receiving passing grades: A, B, C, D, credit, pass, etc. There would be no reimbursement for non-passing grades, such as INC, W, F, no pass, etc. (INC's would receive reimbursement AFTER the final passing grade has been assigned.)

III. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVE - Non specified

The veteran may proceed toward any educational goal at a VA-approved institution until his or her entitlement is exhausted. Changes of major or failure to attain the educational objective are of no consequence to the veterans administration.

According to Semester or Trimester Units

SEM. UNITS		LENGTH OF COURSE	HRS OF INSTRUCTION	VA REIMBURSEMENT	
				@ $5.84/hr*	@ $6/hr
1	(part-time)	15 weeks	15	$ 87.60	90
6	(part-time)	"	90	525.60	540
15	(one full semester)	"	225	1,314.00	1,350
20	(" " " overload)	"	300	1,752.00	1,800
30	(one full year)	"	450	2,628.00	2,700
60	(two full years)	"	900	5,256.00	5,400
120	(bachelors degree)	"	1,800	10,512.00	10,800

According to Quarter Hours

QTR HRS		LENGTH OF COURSE	HRS OF INSTRUCTION	@ $5.84/hr*	@ $6/hr
1	(part-time)	10 weeks	10	$ 58.40	$ 60
6	(part-time)	"	60	350.40	360
15	(one full quarter)	"	150	806.00	900
30	(two full quarters)	"	300	1,752.00	1,800
45	(one full year)	"	450	2,628.00	2,700
90	(two full years)	"	900	5,256.00	5,400
180	(bachelors degree)	"	1,800	10,512.00	10,800

* One semester unit = 15 hours of instruction (1 hour/week for 15 weeks + exam period)

30 semester units = 450 hours of instruction (9month period, an academic year.)

$292/month x 9 months = $2,628 ÷ 450 hours of instruction = $5.84/hour of instruction.

The reasons supporting such a plan are numerous and obvious:

1. Reimbursement-rather than pre-payment or concurrent payment-assures greater retention. Students who commit themselves financially by investing their own dollars or by borrowing money (perhaps from the Veterans Administration Loan Fund) are less likely to withdraw from classes. The higher retention and graduation rates at private institutions across the country substantiate this premise. Furthermore, our own University has experienced this fact by providing courses for corporations. If the corporation pays the tuition for an employee at the beginning of the term, there are many withdrawals; if an employee pays from his own pocket and is reimbursed upon satisfactory completion of the course, there are very few dropouts.

2. The use of *hours of instruction* instead of unit-load avoids the problems of converting semester units to quarter hours. Also, it permits greater flexibility in the assessment of a student's academic load in vocational and technical programs.

3. The new "matching funds plan" for students entering the service in 1976 and afterwards is unrealistic. Young people entering the military service are not apt to plan for their subsequent educational objectives *three years in advance*. From my view, they usually recognize the need for postsecondary education near the end of their tours of duty.

4. The present system requiring the verification of veteran enrollments and all of the costly accounting procedures attendant to their withdrawals, their over-payments, and their academic progress would be eliminated. As you know, the Veterans Administration is trying valiantly to enforce the law (which is well-intended) by means of instituting patchwork regulations on an extremely complex system. The result has been chaotic, viewed by many as impossible to comply with and by others as an infringement on academic freedom.

5. The two-year rule (Appendix C) has raised an important issue. I suppose that each of our states should determine whether or not an out-of-state educational institution may offer courses within its boundaries and under what conditions. This is *not* a regulation to be imposed by the Veterans Administration alone, however, but by HEW, perhaps.

6. The 85-15% rule (Appendix H) is *really* not necessary, in my view. If veterans are bilked by an institution which offers questionable educational programs, they should complain to the Veterans Administration, which in turn should require an investigation by the appropriate School Approval Agency. The limiting of the percentage of veteran enrollments is an awkward, cumbersome, and expensive way to control these questionable practices. Furthermore, it regulates the multitude to control the few.

Needless to say, I am struggling--along with thousands--to suggest a solution to the problems involved with veterans education. My thoughts are personally derived from my service as the AICCU* representative to meetings with the Los Angeles Regional Office of the Veterans Administration.

I have always been concerned with the military service veteran. In fact, I was honored to be quoted in the Congressional Record a few years ago in describing the veteran's passion for higher education.

At any rate, your meeting encouraged me to put my "blue-sky" thoughts on paper. They should not be interpreted as an official position of The University of Southern California.

Conrad Wedberg, Jr.
Director, University Relations
Student Administrative Services
University of Southern California

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*Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98105

Office of Veteran Affairs
180 Schmitz Hall PE-25

June 30, 1978

William G. Shannon, President
William G. Shannon & Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, MD 20795

Dear Mr. Shannon:

I appreciated the opportunity to discuss some of the problems that institutions have faced when implementing the recent changes in the VA regulations and policies. The meeting at Tacoma Community College on June 19 was informative and provided me with some insight into the difficulties experienced by other schools. As you are probably aware from the comments voiced these difficulties differ in area and degree. After the morning session, I felt that the problems we have experienced at the University of Washington might be better presented in written form. This would allow the community colleges and The Evergreen State College to express their arguments on their own merit without, I hope, having the discussion degenerate into a display of factional interests. Therefore, I will briefly summarize some of these problems and I hope that you will have an opportunity to review them for your study.

Most of the changes initiated or recently enforced by the VA since 1976 have had little impact on the administration of the veterans program at the university. Our system had been developed to a point that most of the changes required either a simple refinement of procedure or minor addition to the existing policies. For this reason our concerns are different from some of the other institutions in the state.

For example, the academic standards of the VA matched those of the university with few exceptions and change of status reports have historically been submitted within 30 days of official change. Other changes such as Appendix M have required additional reporting procedures but we have been fortunate to be able to utilize the university's computer system to the advantage of this office.

However, our ability to adapt to these changes does not mean that they are necessarily desirable policies from the viewpoint of the institution or the veteran. As was stated numerous times at the meeting in Tacoma, many of the policies create automatic overpayments which adds to the existing problem.

Abuse is the reason behind the legislation as I think all institutions recognize. But the VA's approach has been to enforce old regulations or create new ones without a thorough review of the extant body of regulations. For example, Appendix M did put a stop to a serious area of abuse but created a new problem by making punitive grades advantegous to a veteran since he could be paid for a failure and then repeat the course to keep the grade point within acceptable standards. The VA issued Appendix O to fill the gap, discovered it was completely ineffective, and issued the revised Appendix O in February of 1978. This was issued with a stipulation that it was retroactive to December 1976 forcing the institutions to evaluate active and inactive records to determine status. Although the records had been evaluated once under the original circular, they now had to be evaluated under different criteria. Granted, Appendix G permitted the institutions to apply for a suspension until September 30, 1978 but this only delays an inevitable record check. It would have been better, in this case and all regulatory or policy changes, to give at least two months advance notice to the institutions and make the change effective the first day of the quarter succeeding the notice. This would allow the institutions to develop a procedure, make written comments to the VA and address questions to the regional offices. From these comments and questions problems could be anticipated, guidelines developed, and changes made if necessary before the effective date. The current practice of publishing the circulars in the federal register after the effective date does not allow time for planning since the changes generally must be made upon receipt of the circular and not after the comments are received by the VA.

The perfect example of the lack of adequate planning is the "seat time" or "12-hour rule" regulation (VAR 14272(D)). As I mentioned in the meeting, this regulation is not justified, it is not based on the statutes, and it does not take current educational methods into consideration. Regardless of my personal view of the regulation, the problems associated with its enforcement are directly related to a lack of development and a review of current regulations. The concept for this regulation is based on Section 7788(a) of Title 38 USC which provides for measurement of courses for non-college degree programs. Since the concept of vocational training is vastly different from academic training, the attempt to apply its principles to academic degree programs has created a real administrative problem. It is one thing to write a regulation but quite another to implement it, especially when the concept is based on a set of criteria that applies to a defferent type of education. In addition, the "seat-time" regulation is not compatible with existing regulations which have not been revised. Even the new DVB Circular 20-78-27 on internal payments completely ignores the question.

A great deal of time must now be spent evaluating each program of studies to determine proper certification and this office must check approximately 2,000 programs each quarter. Since the regulations are vague it is difficult to decide exactly what criteria is to be used. For example, types of training such as independent study and Other Practical Training are based on credits only which is not a problem until combined with resident training which has two sets of criterion. Education practicums would not be eligible for payment except that the VA Central Office allowed an exception and used the provisions of VAR 14272(F) to justify payment although the criteria is not met. Other courses that are similar in nature, however, have not been exempted.

In addition, DVB Circular 20-77-16 stipulates that classtime be distinguished between lecture, labs, and workshops. What is a workshop at an academic institution? A chemistry lab is a well recognized type of course. But what about courses in physical education or perhaps drama? Are they lectures, labs, or workshops? The institutions must calculate the "seat-time" for these types of courses without a concrete definition but still be under the threat of a liability assessment.

It seems to me that the VA has lost sight of its purpose. The administrators are concerned with abuse, as they should be, but to the detriment of those the program is designed to serve. A more cautious approach to the problem, a review of the regulations in effect, and consultation with the institutions which are going to implement the changes might better serve all concerned. This review should include advance notice and a future beginning date that coincides with the start of a term.

I imagine your study of these issues is a difficult undertaking. The range of views expressed must cover the spectrum. However, your patience in listening to the adherents of various and often conflicting philosophier is admirable. Again, I appreciate the time you spent with us. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Van Johnson
Veterans Coordinator

VJ:mab

DRAFT

University of Washington
Seattle 6/19/78

STANDARDS OF PROGRESS

The Standards of Progress as defined by the VA are compatible with those of the University of Washington, with a few exceptions. The adoption of Appendix M and O and other regulatory requirements (VAR 14253 D) allows the university to operate the veterans' program under these standards without complications. However, the method of implementation of these requirements used by the VA and the manner that these requirements operate in practice needs to be reviewed. These are the areas, in my opinion, that create a hardship for the veteran and the institution other than the standards themselves.

My concern about methods of implementation can best be seen with the initiation of the Revised Appendix O of DVB Circular 20-76-84. This Circular was issued on February 3, 1978 and was effective December 1, 1976, over a year prior. The veterans were not notified in advance that they were now to be evaluated under a different system even though they met the particular requirements in effect at the time, and the institution had to review a great number of past records to determine the status of each veteran enrolled over that period. (In the case of the University of Washington, approximately 8000 - 9000 records would have to be checked either now or after 9/30/78 - the date of the report). A better approach would have been to (1) wait for the review, (2) give at least two months advance notice, and (3) not make the ruling retroactive but for the beginning of the next quarter.

The application of the Standards of Progress in actual practice does not have the redeeming value of assisting a veteran with academic problems. For example, the University of Washington has a warning, probationary quarter for new students. The VA does not recognize this warning period but considers it the 1st probationary quarter. It creates extra work for the OVA to have to determine progress with this difference but it does not create insurmountable problems. In fact, the veteran, or regular student for that matter, probably could use some effective counseling since in an institution of 37,000 students one can be easily lost in the numbers game. In reality, the veterans benefits are interrupted, pending counseling, but he will be approved for further training and I question the effectiveness of the counseling. Instead, further hardship has been created that will probably cause additional academic problems. Such a procedure has not solved the problem, but merely created a new one.

From my experience, many of the VA's regulatory requirements or policies have not been developed sufficiently before implementation. The concepts have not necessarily created roadblocks to a veteran's

Univ. of Washington.

education, but the ruling is issued without proper guidelines or without the development or review of existing regulations that have a bearing on the new one. The classic example, of course is VA 14272 (d) or the 12 hour rule. That particular regulation was issued without evaluating modern educational programs, without evaluating the extant regulations and their value in relation to current institutional practices, and without recgonizing deficiencies in other regulations with which 14272 (d) was tied, such as types of training. Because of this lack of careful review the administrative problems associated with the implementation of the regulation by the institutions is horrendous.

On the whole policies and procedures are effective and realistic with the exception of 14272 (d) but more time should be spent in development of procedures, these procedures should not be retroactive, and advance notice should be given to the institution and the veteran.

uwgb

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Green Bay, Wisconsin 54302

June 12, 1978

Mr. Doug Bradley, V.A. Consultant
165 Division Street
Madison, WI 53704

Dear Mr. Bradley:

I am sorry that I did not have sufficient advance notice of your meeting in Madison on June [illegible] allow me to attend and express my concerns and opinions. We have had a University Without Walls program here at UWGB for the past five years and the problem of discriminatory treatment of independent study courses, credits, and programs that clearly lead to a regular degree has been a constant bone of contention. Needless to say, the V.A.'s position has discouraged veterans from enrolling in this program because they cannot recover their out-of-pocket costs for tuition, books, and materials.

As you may know, the intent and purpose of extended degree programs has been to allow students to demonstrate learning and achievement at a collegiate level, but through a variety of modes and time schedules. It seems highly inappropriate for the V.A. to superimpose their detached judgement on a degree program that has been approved and supervised by the faculty and administration of an accredited college or university. This same faculty judgement, approval and supervision does not become suddenly more "blessed" by virtue of possible lecture attendance in a classroom setting. As you know, the credit unit is based upon an assumption of approximately 45 hours of effort in a variety of learning activities and processes, some of which may be lecture, discussion or laboratory; but it is certainly clear that, in fact, a majority of the learning activity is not in a classroom setting.

If possible, it would seem to be more fruitful for the V.A. to exert a little more effort toward increasing bona fide learning opportunities for veterans than to impose a set of judgements that should be left to reputable institutions of higher education. If necessary, the rather large sums of V.A. money granted to the various state approval agencies should require those agencies to get out in the field and evaluate those programs that are within their approval region. In the present system the V.A. pays for approval agencies and then ties their hands with rules that do not allow them to make any meaningful evaluations or judgements. The system is in place, why not allow it to work as it was intended to work rather than using these agencies as political buffers for the V.A.?

At the very minimum an extended degree student should be allowed to recover all legitimate out-of-pocket costs. I would propose that a sufficient safeguard would be to pay the veteran up to the amount of these costs in the normal pay schedule and then allow the release of a "balloon" payment of the normal benefits balance for the term in question when the institution certifies that the credits have been successfully completed.

Our UWW program and our new Bachelor of Arts - General Studies extended degree program require periodic faculty contact, either in-person or by media, and even this limited contact requires travel and other additional costs for the student. Think of the boon this could be for a veteran in an isolated location, or the handicapped veteran who might be better served by a program that allows him/her to learn while at home or in a medical care facility.

I urge you to bring these concerns to the attention of V.A. officials who might allow colleges and universities to enroll veterans in all of the programs that they offer to all students who are seeking an education. Thank you for any assistance you may be able to render in this regard.

Sincerely,

Ronald A. Dhuey
Registrar

RAD/ms

cc: Dr. David Stewart
U.W. System Central Administration

Office of the Registrar

Peterson Office Building
750 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

June 21, 1978

William G. Shannon & Assoc.
10204 Summit Ave.
Kensington, Maryland

Attn: Mr. Doug Bradley

Dear Mr. Bradley:

We appreciated the opportunity to meet with you on June 8, 1978, to discuss problems concerning the Veterans Administration standards of progress and seat time provisions. As suggested at that meeting, we are providing in writing a summary of our concerns and recommendations about the problem areas experienced or foreseen at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in reporting on the progress of veteran students. We have followed the study format in our discussion.

Standards of Progress

Universities and colleges, whether proprietary or public, are as concerned with standards of progress for their students as any agency which furnishes students with funds to pursue an education. However, there may be differences in philosophy over what constitutes acceptable progress toward a degree. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison we have historically maintained good, workable standards of progress which insure that students pursue genuine educational objectives within appropriate time frames. This matter was discussed two years ago with the Veterans Administration locally and in Washington. Officials of the Milwaukee regional office (VARO) and officials of the Veterans Administration in Washington, took part in these discussions. We had arrived at reporting standards which were acceptable both to the VARO and the University. The proposed new reporting standards threaten to destroy this compromise and place unreasonable and unacceptable reporting burdens on the University. We believe that wherever possible an institution of higher learning (IHL) standards of progress should be adopted. Most institutions do monitor the veteran student's progress toward completion of programs of education. Most institutions of higher learning that are accredited by recognized national accrediting institutions should require little monitoring by state approval boards (SAB), thus freeing the SAB to devote more time to institutions which appear to require stricter monitoring based on evaluation of their accrediting process, temporary accreditation, historical factors concerning the institution and similar factors. Approval boards could then focus their efforts on the IHLs that are the source of most of the problems.

Measurement of Standards of Progress

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, standards of progress are of the order shown below. There are variations to these academic probation and drop procedures from one college to another within the university, but basically all provide at least the degree of monitoring indicated.

> A student is considered to be making satisfactory progress so long as he or she is eligible to continue in the University.
>
> Every student is expected to maintain at least a C average (2.0 grade point average on a 4.0 point system) on all work carried whether passed or not in each semester or summer session.
>
> Failure to earn this minimum grade point average, results in a status of probation, strict probation or dropped as shown below.
>
> 1. If not on probation and:
>   - a.) Grade point average in the semester or summer session is less than 2.0, but 1.0 or above: Probation.
>   - b.) Grade point average in the semester or summer session is less than 1.0: Dropped for at Least One Year.
> 2. If on probation and:
>   - a.) Grade point average in a semester or summer session is less than 2.0, but 1.5 or above: Strict Probation.
>   - b.) Grade point average in the semester or summer session is less than 1.5: Dropped for at Least One Year.
> 3. If on strict probation and the grade point average is less than 2.0: Dropped for at Least One Year.

Any student on probation or strict probation will be automatically cleared of probation at the end of any semester when:

1. The semester grade point average is 2.0 or above on 12 or more graded credits and the overall grade point average is 2.0 or above.
2. The student attends a summer session has a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above at the end of the summer session and in the preceding semester, earned a 2.0 or above on at least 12 graded credits.

A student whose grade point average has placed him or her in dropped status may return on strict probation after being away the required length of time and after showing the college dean that he or she is in a position to devote sufficient energy to scholastic work and wishes to do so.

The requirement to establish and insure compliance with appropriate standards of progress is not objectionable. What is objectionable is for the Veterans Administration to impose on the IHL such as the University of Wisconsin, which maintain adequate standards of progress, additional specific requirements which do not contribute to the educational program but essentially are intended to monitor and control payment of VA benefits. Not only is this objectionable from a philosophical point of view, but it preempts the resources of the University for essentially VA compliance purposes. We believe our standards are appropriate and sufficient to weed out those who are unable to profit by higher education and those who may, for their own reasons, seek to continue receiving veterans benefits without pursuing genuine educational objectives.

NONPUNITIVE GRADES

At this institution we have no objection to reporting courses for which the grade assigned is not used to compute the requirements for graduation, including courses from which the student withdraws if it affects training time. What we do object to is (1) without understanding the IHL's standards of progress, grading practices, nontraditional educational programs, etc., and the curricular rationale upon which these are based, the VA imposes its own standards of progress in these areas and, (2) in our experience, the VA expects the IHL to certify that students have not met these VA standards of progress. It is our position that we should report minimum essential facts about the students' academic work required by the Veterans Administration to make its own determinations of whether the student has made satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress for their purposes.

When it is determined, at this institution, that a student is making unsatisfactory progress (e.g. academic dismissal), that fact is reported to the Veterans Administration. If, in fact, the VA wishes to have it reported that the student is on probation that fact also can be reported. Our current practice, which has VARO concurrence, is to report only these facts. This procedure has been sufficient to insure that abuses have not occurred for the last two years.

APPENDIX O

We have no objection to reporting to the Veterans Administration when a student accumulates 13 credits of failure. However, we would have the greatest difficulty in attempting to determine when a student's course may or may not be considered for graduation. This may vary by program or for individual cases, and would require a manual degree monitoring program to be set up for each veteran student. Further, our degree programs regulate such cases so as to avoid abuses, whereas the procedures of Appendix O will not. Institutions wishing to abet student abuses could do so by the expedient of giving high grades for all courses or specific courses.

An additional problem with Appendix O will develop from the fact that after a student has been reported as having 13 credits of failure, the VA may instruct an institution to discount certain courses in which the grade of failure was received. It will be both difficult and expensive to develop computer programming to deal with such a situation. Manual processing is also quite expensive. Either mode of operation will require IHL to keep individual academic records for VA purposes, in addition to those kept for the school's own operations. For this reason, we feel that a more satisfactory solution would be to report when a veteran student has accumulated 13 credis of F and to report subsequent Fs individually to the Veterans Administration. The VA could then determine the point at which the student was making unsatisfactory progress for their purposes.

The requirements of appendix O appear to require additional monitoring which is not necessary in view of current VA regulations already implemented. We recommend that appendix O be rescinded.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

When unsatisfactory progress is reported to the VA and the VA has exercised its prerogative to consider mitigating circumstances to permit the student to continue, this should be a matter between the veteran and the Veterans Administration and should not involve the IHL. We consider that it is reasonable and desirable for the VA to consider mitigating circumstances concerning progress of a student toward the degree. However, we object to the VA's requiring that the IHL collect this information from the student if it is not readily available from the withdrawal records. We feel that any such soliciation should be the responsibility of the Veterans Administration ard could be performed by its own counselors. VA educational counselors, in the past, met with such students and were able to determine whether and to what extent there were mitigating circumstances that should be considered. It was not necessary for the school or college to report anything but the facts concerning progress toward the degree. In our opinion, this should be reinstituted.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

It is our feeling that when a student is enrolled in a program that does not lead to a degree, specialization, or certification, as, for instance, special students, the VA should evaluate these students' programs on an individual basis. Special students do not generally fall under the same standards of progress that are used for degree seeking students. Consequently, special students may be allowed to continue under circumstances that would cause degree seeking students to be discontinued. For this reason, determination of whether a student in such nondegree status should receive veterans benefits should be made by the Veterans Administration through its counseling service.

It is also our recommendation that the "course of study" should be specifically defined to mean the degree program and not a major program or individual course. This will avoid vagueness in an area where all three definitions have been used from time to time in Veterans Administration regulations.

It has been our experience that the Veterans Administraiton will make regulations retroactive to a time long before the release date of the regulation. As an example, requirements for Appendix O are to take place retroactive to December 1976, while the revised Appendix O was only released to the field in the spring of 1978. Veterans who have been enrolled between 1976 and 1978 have had no knowledge of these regulations and, therefore, were not aware of the implication when they were enrolling in certain courses.

It has also been our experience that the Veterans Administration has been very slow in notifying students of changes in regulations that affect them. In fact, much of the job of informing students has been left to the IHL. This has required a great deal of personnel time and postage for institutions to contact and instruct individual veterans about situations in which they have not been making satisfactory progress according to the Veterans Administration or of academic pursuits which could develop into situations leading to unsatisfactory progress for Veterans Administration purposes. In a memo to the VA central office, Dorothy Stepien, Assistant Registrar at this institution suggested that a student copy of the 1999 and 1999b be provided for the student. It was also suggested that these copies be provided with franking privileges to avoid postage costs for the institutions or the students. The forms were revised recently but apparently this suggestion either was not accepted or was received too late to be included in this current forms revision. However, we continue to believe this would be the best means for notifying the student of what was being reported to the Veterans Administration and what effect this might have on a student. In addition, such notices would be timely thus permitting prompt, intelligent decisions by the student.

As we discussed with you, the waiver described in Appendix O for institutions is worded so that the requirements for Appendix O must be met in order for the waiver to be accepted. No institution that we are aware of would have a policy of dismissing a student solely on the basis of accumulating 13 credits of punitive grades, as long as the student's overall progress and GPA is satisfactory.

SEAT TIME

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, full time for undergraduate students is 12 credits. We do not feel that it is appropriate for the Veterans Administration to determine how much time should be required in class sessions for credit to be granted. It is of no particular merit to require students to "warm a seat" for a prescribed number of minutes during a semester. Students may learn much of their material by home study, by reflection, by library work, by writing papers, etc. We do not maintain records of class attendance and cannot do so. We do, however, maintain records of how often classes meet and at what time period. As a general rule, we assign credit relative to 50 minutes of class time per credit, per week for our semester and for our laboratory courses, two or three 50 minute periods of laboratory per credit, per week is common standard. In summer sessions or modular course sessions, as well as research oriented courses in general, a course may be intensified and enhanced with additional course requirements, but may not require as many in-class hours as in a regular semester. This would in no way diminish the value of the credits assigned for the class. The VA should not tamper with this credit assessment.

RECORD KEEPING

We have not experienced major problems regarding VA requirements on record keeping. It is good institutional practice to have records of a student's academic progress and the backup records to support these and we have done so historically. We have, however, had to develop an entire computer program to keep track of the VA requirements for reporting veterans under these standards of progress regulations. This has been a costly matter. It requires about $500.00 monthly just to maintain the data base involved. This does not include special programs to keep up with the ever-changing or new regulations, nor does it consider salaries of the two full time persons involved in administering the program. Since we have fewer than 1,000 veterans, this is a great deal of money per student for this purpose. Additionally, it will become more costly as the VA adds new requirements or eliminates old requirements. It is our understanding that the Veterans Administration now intends completely to do away with previously negotiated reporting requirements and revert to a system using only Appendix O and Appendix M. If this is the case, we have developed a large computer system which will no longer be usable after extended negotiations with VARO and the Veterans Administration in Washington, D. C. We have programmed a computer generated 1999B and have had to reprogram because the forms changed. We feel our computer system provides very accurate and up-to-date information on each individual veteran, but it is very costly to do the kind of tracking contemplated.

We have no comment as to how institutions might improve their record keeping for Veterans Administration purposes, since this may vary by the size of the school, the amount of automation in the records system and the organization of the University. We feel, however, that the VA might consider simplifying and more closely monitoring their own record keeping system. Turnaround time for processing information from institutions has, in our experience, a long time lag and is a major source of overpayments to veterans. For example, we report to the

VA that a student dropped courses, but if this is not reported by the 10th of the month the veteran will receive his check at the beginning of the next month, because the VA computer system cannot assimilate this information in the 15 or 20 days remaining before payment. We also find that there are instances of confusion among the persons in the VA regional office who are giving information and in the way these people interpret information that we send to them. Many times they appear to have difficulty keeping up with changes of laws and regulations and policy level opinions. We sympathize since we also have difficulty keeping up with these numerous changes. In addition, the exact legal requirements may be embellished and elaborated by the regulations. For example, the legal requirements on catalogue reporting for Appendix P are not exactly what is required by DVB circular or the memorandum of clarification from VARO.

SAFEGUARDS

The alarming overpayment situation which brought on all these regulations developed when the VA, in attempting to help the veteran students, provided a prepayment program. At that time a veteran was paid at the beginning of the month before he actually completed the enrollment period for which he was being paid. If he dropped out of school or dropped credits he had already been paid for the following enrollment period before the VARO could be aware of the change of status. For this reason a large number of overpayments was inevitable. In eliminating the prepayment situation, most of the overpayment problems were eliminated. The regulations should therefore recognize the situation as it presently exists. This will permit much simplification in reporting by IHL.

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, if any fraud were being perpetrated, it would be corrected by reporting withdrawals after midterm and in reporting students who received all failures or incompletes at the end of the semester. It seems to have been especially effective that this information was forwarded to the VA so that they could counsel these students before they were again eligible for benefits. This allowed for screening out students who may have been attempting to collect payments fraudulently and permit students who were in academic difficulty to continue, with counseling and tutorial assistance. We believe that there has not been abuse of the VA benefits at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. At the time we first began to monitor our students about 22 veterans received all Fs. This number has been reduced to approximately 15 veterans who received all Fs at the end of the semester, most of whom were surely in genuine academic difficulty.

We believe it would be helpful for the veteran to be himself required to send to the VA a copy of his transcript at the end of each semester. This would allow the VA to make appropriate determination as to whether the student appears to be progressing satisfactorily toward completion of the educational program.

CATALOGUES AND BULLETINS

The intent of the VA in making requirements that catalogues be true and correct and contain certain information, appears to be provided as consumer protection for the veteran. The Veterans Administration is not an appropriate agency to enforce such a regulation. This appears to be a matter that should come under other federal regulations and laws on consumer safety and consumer liability. For this purpose it might be sufficient to insure that IHL meet federal requirements for individual financial support for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Various recommendations have been mentioned in this paper. As previously mentioned, our recommendations are as follows:

1) Elimination of Appendix O.
2) Strict adherence to the minimum statutory requirements without elaboration and additional reporting requirements added in interpretations of the law.
3) We have appreciated the flexibility of the Milwaukee VARO in developing monitoring procedures suitable for our University. A nationwide effort to achieve such flexibility by VAROs in tailoring compliance regulations to the realities of the individual institutions should be adopted.
4) Institutions should be required to report only facts concerning academic records of veteran students and not be requested to provide evaluations based on VA performance standards.
5) Individual counseling by VA counselors at institutions should be reinstituted.
6) State approval boards should be given flexibility to reduce monitoring procedures for institutions which have undergone stringent accrediting processes by nationally recognized accrediting agencies.
7) The VA should not attempt to regulate catalogue content.
8) The VA should eliminate seat time requirements.
9) Regulations should apply prospectively rather than retroactively.
10) More responsibility should be placed on the veteran student himself to provide the VA with information concerning his academic progress.
11) The present veterans program is phasing out. Therefore, the monitoring programs should be developed to apply primarily to the new program recently established.

We believe these recommendations will do much to minimize the impact of Veterans Administration regulations on universities and colleges and will greatly improve relations between these institutions and the VARO. If there is other information or supporting data you would find useful, please call on us for we are very interested in this subject.

Yours very sincerely,

Dorothy Stepien

T. H. Hoover and Dorothy I. Stepien,
Registrar Assistant Registrar

THH/pk

cc: Cliff Andreoli
Vice Chancellor Kearl
Mike Liethen
Nick Rott

The University of Wisconsin System

CO-DIRECTOR EXTENDED DEGREE PROGRAMS
1646 Van Hise Hall / Madison, Wisconsin 53706 / 608 / 263-2728

June 19, 1978

Mr. Doug Bradley
VA Consultant
165 Division Street
Madison, WI 53704

Dear Mr. Bradley:

We appreciate this opportunity to react to certain regulations of the Veterans Administration as requested in the meeting held in Madison on June 8 which was attended by David Stewart of our staff. Our recommendations are framed around the perspective of universities offering degrees in the extended (external) format. There will be three Extended Degrees at University of Wisconsin System institutions in the years ahead.

First, we would like to protest strongly use of the criterion "seat time" or "standard class session" in determining any person's eligibility for veterans' benefits. VA Regulation 14272(D) states that "in no case will a course be measured as full-time when less than 12 class sessions are required." This regulation has the effect of denigrating credits earned via independent study or related self-study modules. It is in any event an irrelevant criterion for determining a student's full- or part-time status and should be eliminated.

Second, we would like to comment on VA special regulations pertaining to external degrees even though no comment about these regulations has been asked for. As the regulations now read (paragraph 14280, Transmittal Sheet 390, 89th Change to VA Regulations under U.S.C. chs. 34, 35, and 36, pars. 14000 series, as amended by Transmittal Sheet 457, December 1974) "the course shall be measured in credit hours provided a major portion of the credit hours for which the veteran or eligible person is enrolled during any term is offered through conventional classroom and/or laboratory sessions."

Students in the University of Wisconsin Extended Degree Programs may spend very little time in seats in traditional classes on campus. They will instead be learning at home, in small informal study groups, in weekend workshop sessions, via radio or television, or on the job. This does not mean that their time commitments are any less than those of a student attending a traditional campus class. Neither does it imply any quality differential--a fact documented by faculty determination that Extended Degree students will acquire exactly the same degree earned by students registered for classes on campus.

If it is necessary to limit full veterans' benefits only to persons who are not "part-time" under some definition, then extended (external) degree students should be able to qualify if they earn credits equal to the number of credits considered as a full-time load for traditional students during the same time period.

Universities: Eau Claire, Green Bay, LaCrosse, Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Parkside, Platteville, River Falls, Stevens Point, Stout, Superior, Whitewater
University Centers: Baraboo/Sauk County, Barron County, Fond du Lac, Fox Valley, Manitowoc County, Marathon County, Marinette County, Marshfield/Wood County, Medford, Richland, Rock County, Sheboygan County, Washington County, Waukesha County. Extension: Statewide

Page Two
Mr. Bradley
June 19, 1978

The only other point that we would like to make is that we share the concerns about complexity of VA Regulations that were expressed by persons attending the Madison meeting. Much of the difficulty, it seems to us, results from an attempt by VA officials to effect detailed regulation of a process (education) that is unfamiliar to them. There is a very strong movement within the field of education toward flexible learning formats that can make it easier for adults, as well as young people, to pursue an education on terms most suitable to their individual learning styles and life situations. Reading the VA Regulations relating to independent study and external degrees, it appears that universities and veterans who are their students are to be discouraged from engaging in such programs.

While we are quite critical of some of the VA Regulations, we hope you will convey to the appropriate officials our appreciation for being able to express our opinions.

Sincerely,

James W. Kolka

James W. Kolka

E. Nelson Swinerton

JWK/sjk

cc: David W. Stewart

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
ONE DUPONT CIRCLE
WASHINGTON D C 20036

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

March 9, 1977

Administrator of Veterans Affairs (271A)
Veterans Administration
810 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20420

Dear Sir:

This is to provide comments on proposed policies and procedures for implementing PL 94-502 as published in the Federal Register of February 9, on behalf of ten higher education associations: the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the American Council on Education, the Association of American Universities, the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, and the National University Extension Association.

Like the issues discussed in our letter of January 14, the provisions of appendices "M" and "O" raise serious problems for educational institutions. Colleges cannot comply with appendices M and O without surrendering their right to set standards of student progress and other academic policy determinations, submitting to extensive bureaucratic monitoring by the VA, and incurring costly and educationally unjustifiable recordkeeping which limits the resources and administrative time available for the primary enterprise of education. No wonder, then, that a number of institutions have already informed you that they will be unable to comply.

We find no provision in law requiring institutions to perform the burdensome and time-consuming duties these regulations would impose. While sections 206 and 307 of PL 94-502, amending sections 1674 and 1724 of Title 38, U.S. Code, do require certain grading and progress standards for benefits eligibility, they do not require that the education institution be the primary mode of enforcement--nor, to our knowledge, does any other provision of the law. In fact, section 1784, which describes the institutional reporting obligation and sets the payment of $5 a year as the standard reporting fee, requires only that the institution report the "enrollment, interruption, and termination" of each veteran student in the manner prescribed by the Administrator.

The statute does not indicate a necessity to report or calculate grades and progress according to VA formulas. Furthermore, the sections of the law which "M" and "O" are implementing mention the VA and the student, and in no way imply responsibility by the institution in determining the student's grade standing for benefits eligibility.

Therefore, there is no reason why higher education institutions should accept primary responsibility for these determinations, especially when they are contrary to educational policy and practice, and require duplicative record systems which would have to be established as an unpaid service to the VA. In addition, institutions may be required to accept financial liability for oversights and errors in this complex recordkeeping process--which makes compliance with these circulars, at best, a serious risk for colleges and universities.

We suggest several alternative modes of enforcement which may alleviate our problems with appendices M and O, while achieving their purposes:

Under Appendix M, the description of mitigating circumstances for "W" grades in e.(6) suggests that the withdrawal must usually be due to unsatisfactory progress or personal hardship. We are concerned that this will encourage veteran students to opt for F's in order to obtain benefits, while other students will receive W grades without jeopardizing their academic standing. Thus veterans will be judged by different academic criteria than other students (and recipients of other forms of federal aid) in the same course of study.

Colleges are only required to report enrollment, termination, and interruption of a course, which means withdrawals will be reported. But the necessity of reporting other nonpunitive grades given to veterans adds a whole new layer of onorous recordkeeping which defeats the very purpose of nonpunitive grades. Colleges offer nonpunitive grades either because certain courses are judged worthwhile, but are not intended to replace completion of the core courses necessary for graduation, or because the school determines that there are mitigating circumstances in the student's inadequate pursuit of a course. The VA rejects reliance on institutional judgment and policy, and seeks instead to impose another layer of bureaucracy. It is significant that the grading systems of the most elite universities would have the most difficulty conforming with VA "standards." The VA is effectively requiring conformance with its standards, contrary to the basic premises of the agreement schools entered into for the education of veterans, and contrary to the statutory prohibition against federal interference in academic policies.

We also note that, under Appendix M, colleges are only liable for failure to report nonpunitive grades and withdrawals within 30 days of their occurrence, while the veteran student is liable retroactively for what will in most cases be several months of prorated benefits. Implementing this provision will add to the reported overpayment statistics, even as prepayment has been eliminated to reduce these statistics.

Appendix O implements section 206 of PL 94-502 amending section 1674 of Title 38. The VA's interpretation of this law does not reflect the realities of the college grading process, or the normal patterns of pursuit by all students.

The VA interprets "at any time" to mean auditing satisfactory progress every quarter or semester, regardless of institutional policy and practice. This is excessive and impossible. Analysis of transcripts requires not only the computation of credit hours, but also the determination of which courses satisfy general educational requirements and which apply to variable major/minor requirements as well as the various grade-point average requirements. This type of evaluation is usually done formally once during a student's course of study, a semester or two prior to graduation. In large colleges and universities, six to eight months may be required to complete the "graduation checks" for a class of graduates. The VA not only demands a calculation for each veteran every quarter--it does not accept the institutional standards for making the calculation.

Procedures would be greatly simplified, and achieve the same purpose, if the institution's normal check of satisfactory progress near the end of the program were substituted. This would eliminate the extra paperwork of actual mathematical checks and would be more efficient, since students are much less likely to face impossible barriers to completion on time in the earlier parts of their programs. It is also more realistic, since accurate determination of the likelihood of on-time completion may not be possible until the latter part of a degree program when a student has chosen a major.

Another alternative is for the student to forward a transcript or certification of progress to the VA for determination of benefits each semester. This is clearly permissible under section 1790(c). Another option would be to use the VA representative on campus to make this determination. Thus, colleges would not be forced to assume responsibility for determining benefits eligibility, nor would they have to perform the VA clerical work which has no educational purpose. If the VA insists on establishing its own requirements for academic progress, it should assume sole responsibility for their enforcement.

We should also point out that, although the law and regulations consider the certified completion rate of 4 years as "normal" for a 4-year degree program, in reality only about 50 percent of men and a slightly higher proportion of women complete their B.A. degree in 4 years. Furthermore, 20 percent of all men who have completed 4 years of college are not yet eligible for the degree. (Alexander Astin, Keeping Students From Dropping Out, 1972.) These facts emphasize the need for the VA to rethink its position on "normal" completion, and provide a more realistic, flexible, and less bureaucratic method for determining active pursuit of course.

We look forward to the opportunity of working with you to modify these regulations so that the nation's colleges and universities will be able to comply with them consistent with their own educational standards and policies.

Sincerely,

Charles B. Saunders, Jr.

Charles B. Saunders, Jr.
Director of Governmental Relations

AMERICAN VETERANS COMMITTEE
"CITIZENS FIRST, VETERANS SECOND"
NATIONAL OFFICE • 1333 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036 • 202-293-4890

OFFICERS
FORMER NATIONAL CHAIRMAN
NATIONAL BOARD
NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 28, 1978

Mr. Frank B. Peschi
8311 Freemont Place
New Carrollton, MD 20784

Dear Frank,

Here is a copy of AVC's statement on 85-15 and the other regulations of the GI Bill. Also enclosed is our platform plank on the GI Bill. Our '78 Convention adopted the same resolution.

If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

June

June A. Willenz
Executive Director

encls.
JAW:mkd

March 10, 1977

Comments on Proposed Regulations
Veterans Education
Policies and Procedures, by the
AMERICAN VETERANS COMMITTEES, (AVC)

These comments are addressed to the general philosophy and impact of the proposed VA policies and procedured concerning provisions of PL 94-502. We will not dwell here on the specifics of the provisions which we have not had time to study in detail, but will review the effects of the procedures upon the student-veterans.

Our concern is that the impact of these procedures are negative for the Vietnam-era veterans which PL 94-502 was supposed to benefit. While we are aware of and support the VA's desire to prevent the bilking of veterans and the government by unscrupulous profiteers in the guise of "educational institutions," this understandable concern must not become a vehicle for throwing out the baby with the bath.

Some of the procedures regarding the "85-15 rule,", the "standards of progress," the limitations of enrollment of veterans in "independent study," the restrictions on course enrollment, the rigid requirements of attendence, all have contributed towards a discriminatory situation for veterans as students. These procedures set up two different classes of students - veteransstudents and non-veterans students, with the veteran-students being required to meet standards of achievement and attendance that the non-veteran students are not required to meet. Enormous administrative burdens are placed upon the administrations of educational institutions by these procedures which in turn negatively affect the veteran-students.

It would seem that the VA procedures are an intrusion into educational policy that would best be left to the educational institutions themselves, and to the accrediting associations which monitor them. Their experience and expertise were not considered, as far as we know, in the formulation of these procedures. Also, we question whether the VA alone can or should determine "mitigating circumstances" of the student veteran's inability to meet the standards and requirements set forth in these procedures. Surely, educational institutions are in a better position to evaluate a student's progress and intent than an outside administrative agency not grounded in educational policy or versed in the complex areas of new educational modes.

There are serious questions whether the rightsto privacy of student-veterans and other students is being violated by the practice of random inspection of records at educational institutions, a practice which is entailed in these procedures. Another serious question of the suspension of veterans benefits because of failure to comply with the requirements set forth in these procedures is whether the veteran's right to due process is violated when no prior notice or hearing is granted prior to such suspension.

The VA's laudable concern to reduce fraud and abuse of the GI Bill for Vietnam-era Veterans must not be achieved at the cost of precluding many veterans from utilizing the GI Bill. While the tightening up of monitoring procedures may seem a logical way, the original inten of the GI Bill must not be lost. If more careful evaluation and acco ability is needed, then the educational policy-makers must be called in to participate in the development of appropriate procedures so t the student-veterans are protected and encouraged to take advantag of the GI Bill. We believe the intent of the Congress was to mak more educational opportunities for veterans, not less. Therefore, we recommend a thorough and in-depth review of the current procedures, involving the input of the educational and accrediting institutions and alsobhaving the input of the clients - the student-veterans themselves with the object of formulating more rational and less discriminatory procedures that will be in the best interests of the veterans, without infringing on the interests of the public.

National Association of Concerned Veterans

July 3, 1978

William G. Shannon & Associates
10204 Summit Ave.
Kensington, Md. 29795

Dear Dr. Shannon:

It is indeed a pleasure to have this opportunity to provide written comment regarding your current study on V.A. legislation and/or regulation dealing with standards of progress and "seat time."

1. Seat time- No statute exsists which allows the Administrator of Veterans Affairs the implicit or explicit authority to determine what constitutes full-time training at an institution of higher learning. Current regulations have the effect of dictating what instructional methodology can be utilized without any empirical data to support the implication that classroom attendance is the only viable educational method.

In an age of instructional innovation VA regulations serve to hinder progressive programs regardless of viability. It is the belief of the NACV that current regulations are without legislative basis, are unwarranted and serve no constructive purpose. Rather than instituting reactionary procedure to deal with a minority of institutions and programs, the VA should endeavor to ensure that State Approving Agencies more closely monitor programs and approve or not approve them upon merit, not an all encompassing regulation.

In summary, the NACV feels strongly that seat time requirements serve little useful purpose, are not required, and that the intended result could better be served by a strengthened system of State Approving Agencies under VA contract, but not VA control.

2. Standards of Progress- Those comments provided you in Dallas on June 23, 1978 require little amplification. VA policies have imposed dual standards upon many colleges; one for veterans and one for non-veterans. This is unacceptable.

There are many inconsistencies and inequities within current regulations. Higher education is sensitized to the problems of GI Bill abuse, and should be granted the opportunity to address this problem independent of any externally applied standards. Federal intrusion into the arena of higher education is frightening

National Association of Concerned Veterans

and unacceptable. The Educational Community has integrity, experience and resources available to realistically address problems of abuse. The multitude of regulations issued by the VA are a direct insult to this integrity and interfere with pursuit of reasonable accomodations.

Again, the NACV would encourage the abolition of current regulations and would propose a strengthened SAA system to address the problems at state levels unfettend by VA control and unnecessary regulation.

If I may be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

James R. Hoffman

JAMES R. HOFFMAN
Education Director
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El Paso, TX 79935
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ISSUE STATEMENT

Title 38, U. S. Code provides that educational institutions are to determine full-time training for VA Educational payment purposes. Section 1788, Paragraph (a) Subparagraph 4. It further provides that the State Approving Agency is to approve programs of education for VA Benefits; Section 1775.

In 1976 the VA began in earnest a program to curb abuses of the G. I. Bill, and reduce the volume of overpayments. This was manifested in a required tightening of institutional procedures with regard to; standards of academic progress, identifying GPA requirements, and timely reporting of withdrawal from or non-completion of courses.

While these procedures were universally recognized and accepted - indeed sought by the educational community - they represented the tip of the proverbial iceberg with respect to the remainder of forthcoming requirements.

Agency inertia carried the Veterans Administration beyond the point at which a cost effective accountability procedure for the institutions and optimum educational access for the Veteran was reached.

The bulk of these never ending requirements serve no good purpose. They endeavor not to enhance the Veterans access to programs of education. They do not facilitate easier processing and maintenance of the Veteran student. Nor do they at all provide consideration for the individual programs that professional educators know are in the best interests of certain Veteran students. Indeed most of these superfluous requirements, whether by design or not, have the effect of blocking, hindering, denying and discriminating against a significant segment of Veteran students interests and institutional processes. The Veteran has been singled out and required to pursue courses in lockstep fashion down a narrow corridor of archaic programs oblivious to the often more relevant and contemporary programs available to all else.

We feel that the Veterans Administration - this huge bureaucratic Federal agency is not qualified to dictate, to the educational institutions, how to conduct education. This is the responsibility of decentralized and accredited educational agencies and institutions.

We feel that in order to remedy this prolific problem that Congress require that the Veterans Administration return to the original intent and purpose of the G. I. Bill Program: That being to provide Veterans the privilege and capability of pursuing courses at accredited colleges and universities in order to benefit from their collective expertise, Not that the Veterans Administration should be able to require the educational community at large to alter its very nature to conform to some arbitrary educational concept spawned in the bowels of a Federal bureaucracy.

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575 2370

Draft

A POSITION PAPER
ON VA ENCROACHMENT
IN EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The purpose of the G.I. Bill was to provide educational assistance to Veterans who had served honorably during the Korea and Viet Nam eras. Congress, when it passed this legislation, made clear its support of two basic principles. First, the Veterans Administration was to institute procedures to pay benefits to Veterans who were eligible and were attending approved programs of education. Second, the educational institutions and state agencies responsible for educational programs were to define what constituted approved education.

Draft

The role of the institutions was clearly defined in Section 1788 of Title 38 U.S.C., Subparagraph 4 of Paragraph (a) of this section reads:

> (4) an institutional undergraduate course offered by a college or university on a quarter - or semester - hour basis shall be considered a full-time course when a minimum of fourteen semester hours or the equivalent thereof (including such hours for which no credit is granted but which are required to be taken to correct an educational deficiency and which the educational institution considers to be quarter or semester hours for other administrative purposes), for which credit is granted toward a standard college degree...

This portion goes on to say that 12 hours may be considered full-time if the institution so certifies. Paragraph (b) further states that:

> The Administrator shall define part-time training in the case of the types of courses referred to in subsection (a), and shall define full-time and part-time training in a case of all other types of courses pursued under this Chapter or Chapter 34 or 35 of this title.

The language of this section is very clear. The Administrator has the authority to deal with part-time training or with other types of courses but the institutions themselves have the power to define what is full-time training for which credit is granted toward a standard college degree.

The language is equally specific concerning "institutional trade or technical courses" and institutional courses "not leading to a standard college degree" in each case. Congress provided specific requirements of weekly clock hours of instruction.

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Thus, the failure to provide such limits concerning standard college degrees clearly demonstrates Congress' support of the right of I. H. L. institutions to define full-time training under their own procedures.

In dealing with approval of courses, Congress was equally clear as to its intent. Once again it was to the State agencies responsible for education that Congress granted authority. Section 1775, Title 38 U. S. C., Approval of Accredited Courses, states:

> A State approving agency may approve the courses offered by an educational institution when (1) such courses have been accredited and approved by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association...

It also makes additional requirements including (1) the submission of a true and correct copy of the school catalog which includes "its progress requirements for graduation" to include standards of progress, conditions for interruption for unsatisfactory grades or progress, description of the probationary period and conditions for dismissal for unsatisfactory conduct, (2) the maintenance of adequate records to show the progress of the student and (3) a system to evaluate previous training and award appropriate credit toward graduation.

Draft

In short, Congress has specifically provided that educational standards and educational training are to be defined and regulated by those persons who are most able to deal with them -- the educational agencies and institutions within the states. State approving agencies were to provide approval for those programs which met the above standards and educational institutions were to award educational credit and certify training time to VA. Full-time training was defined as training for which an educational institution granted full-time credit.

A Veteran student could select the type of educational program and get the kind of education which best suited her/his individual needs. Such training was limited to those programs which had been determined by the State Approving Agency and nationally recognized accrediting agencies or associations, as providing a valid and useful education. As education changed so did the approved programs.

DIFFICULTIES

Problems began to arise in 1972 when, the VA began to use prepayments and advance payments, because of a variety of pressures from students and Congress, to make it easier for Veterans to begin their training. Many institutions objected to such procedures because they frequently allowed Veterans to receive two months pay for only one day attendance at school. In addition some Veterans and some institutions did act unethically and improperly in drawing benefits or certifying Veterans when not actively participating in educational training.

More importantly, most institutions were somewhat remiss in the speed at which they terminated Veterans who were not in attendance. As Veteran enrollment

Draft

reached its peak, institutions became somewhat lax in their monitoring and reporting procedures. Frequently Veterans who quit after one or two days in class were not "caught" and terminated until the end of the program. Furthermore, Veterans were able to withdraw late in the period receiving no credit but full pay. Many institutions attempted to eliminate such abuses but were informed by VA that procedures, at that time, did not require standards of progress, only enrollment and attendance.

The result of these changes in payment procedures and lax attitudes by school officials was a growing volume of overpayments, the famous Jack Anderson column, the equally famous GAO "billion dollar overpayment" report, more Congressional pressure, and a crackdown by the VA.

This crackdown took three general forms (1) changes in payment procedures (2) pressure on schools to clean up their reporting procedures and (3) encroachment on the responsibility of the educational institutions and state educational agencies.

(1) Payment Procedures

As we have seen, in this decade, the VA first liberalized considerably and then restricted tightly its payment procedures. The liberalization effort involved two steps. First, VA began prepayments. This was to get the Veteran his money as quickly as possible. He was paid at the beginning rather than the end of the month. It also resulted in an increase in overpayments. Any termination of attendance no matter how promptly reported caused at least a slight overpayment because the Veteran had already been paid for that whole month. In addition, if the school did not discover or delayed in reporting the termination until after the first month, an extra overpayment resulted.

Beginning in the Summer of 1974 the VA also began to make advance payments. Again the program was designed to get the Veteran the money when he most needed it - in time to pay tuition. Again the result was an increase in overpayments. Vets could (and some did) start school, draw two months advance pay, and skip out without reporting. No matter how soon the school determined the withdrawal, an overpayment existed.

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After the GOA report, the VA reacted. In June 1977, it eliminated prepayments and restricted advance payments to those specifically requested by the Veterans. In effect, it punished all Veterans for the actions of a few. Nevertheless, this was a justified response and entirely within the domain of VA authority.

In addition, however, the VA eliminated its practice of writing awards for the entire length of the program and required annual certifications by the institutions. It further ordered that all awards be terminated at the end of summer term 1977. Many in the VA felt (and some expressed) that this action was a severe overreaction. The VA did back down from its summer termination date but did require the annual certifications.

Finally, the VA created the Central Accounts Receivable Station (CARS) at St. Paul. It was designed to ease the collection of overpayments and probably has done so. Again, however, it was an overreaction and CARS has been very effective at creating problems for those Veterans who do repay their debts, but has done little for those totally dishonest few who ignore all CARS correspondence.

All in all, the VA has taken appropriate action to reduce overpayments by changing its payment and collection procedures. Prompt reporting by Veterans and schools of terminations, and prompt VA action will eliminate most overpayments.

Draft

(2) Certification Procedures

The VA realized that its changes in payment procedures would not alone be sufficient to reduce or eliminate the overpayment problem. It also began to pressure the schools to clean up their certification procedures. By use of the device of secondary liability, the VA began to require institutions to comply with the thirty day reporting period. By mid 1976 most institutions had responded by developing effective systems of monitoring the continued attendance of their enrolled Veteran population. In most cases, these procedures created an additional burden on the Veteran student. A burden not imposed upon earlier Veterans and not upon other enrolled students. Nevertheless, the institutions did respond because this was an area of VA responsibility and was a justified effort at curbing abuses.

At this point, agency inertia seems to have taken over and the VA began to impose new roadblocks in the path of the Veteran and new certification regulations upon the institutions. The 85-15 ratio, the two-year rule, and the occupational survey were imposed upon all schools, creating additional burdens on the institutions while not costing Veterans any money. Further the VA required schools to have standards of progress and satisfactory grades. This action was a needed step, one long sought by the schools, which effectively prevents Veterans from drawing benefits quarter after quarter without completing any courses. Now the institutions had a means for preventing Veterans from "ripping off" the system. However, as we shall soon see, the VA overstepped its authority on this matter very quickly.

The last significant step by the VA in this area involves the "mitigating circumstances rule". This rule stated that if a Veteran withdrew from classes after 30 days, his benefits would be correspondingly adjusted from the beginning of the term unless he could show mitigating circumstances causing the drop. Again this is an apparently justified device to prevent "rippoffs" of the systems. Here, however, the result is not on decrease but a significant increase in the volume of overpayments. The VA's method of explaining the "mitigating circumstances" portion to the Veteran was never clear and millions of dollars of overpayments are now on the books which will be eliminated as soon as the Veterans are aware of this provision.

Draft

(3) Encroachment on School Policy

Agency inertia reached its high point (one hesitates to say peak) as the VA began to interfere in the educational policies of the educational institutions. This action is evident in five areas. First, the occupational survey. Non-college degree programs are now required not only to provide education and training but also to assure that their graduates are employed in the areas for which that training has qualified them. If a certain portion are not so employed the institution can no longer enroll Veterans. If the VA has the authority to impose these limits, they also presumably have the authority to set them at 100%. This clearly imposes non-training related standards on our education institutions.

Second, the 85-15 rule says that no more than 85% of the students enrolled in a program of education can be Veterans. Again it is imposing limits on institutions and Veterans which are not even related to the quality of training.

Third, while the VA was justified in its efforts to require schools to have standards of progress and procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory grades; the law states that the institutions can have probationary periods. Institutions responded to this requirement and supported its intent. They drafted such standards and had them approved by the State Approving Agencies.

Draft

At this point however, the VA began again to encroach upon the domain of educational authority. It received these standards of progress and ordered the SAA's and the institutions to resubmit many of them, generally because they allowed for not one but two or more quarters of probation. Here, for the first time, the VA was claiming that it, rather than those state agencies responsible for providing education, knew best what constitutes good educational procedure.

Fourth, the 12-hour rule was imposed in October 1976. This was merely a change to VA regulations. A change which, as published in the Federal Register, only applied to courses with terms of non-standard length. The VA, however, in violation of all Federal procedures applied this regulation to all programs of instruction. Without Congressional authority and in violation of Federal rules concerning changes in regulations, the VA has stated that quality education can be paid at the full-time rate only when the student spends 12 hours per week seated in a classroom, with two or more students receiving instruction from a teacher. While the assertion itself is absurd, and the rule illegal (as pointed out by District Court Judge Damon Keith) the important consideration is that once again the VA has claimed that it rather than the educational institutions has the right to define full-time education.

Our fifth point concerns the area of course approvals by the State Approving Agencies. At the time it created the 12-hour rule, the Veterans Administration also began a program of requiring the SAAs to review their course approvals. The result of this effort has been that many programs which had been approved as resident training are now approved as some other type of training (independent study, cooperative training, combined training, etc.) because they do not meet the 12-hour rule. This requires additional certification procedures by the institutions and reduced VA benefits for Veterans. Again the VA is imposing its standards upon the educational community.

In each of these areas, the Veterans Administration has exceeded its authority and has encroached upon the educational policy domains of the agencies and institutions who deal with education. The VA has imposed its standard of education upon those who know best about education -- the educators. This encroachment should stop at once. Congress should make clear that it continues to support its original intent. Education will be defined by educators not VA bureaucrats.

These policies imposed by the VA have had two direct affects upon the VA educational program. First, they have placed new burdens on the school certifying officials. Burdens which are ridiculous both in scope and volume. Burdens which serve no positive purpose. Secondly, and far more importantly, they have created burdens and roadblocks in the paths of Veterans seeking an education. New reporting procedures cause delays. New program requirements severally limit the Veterans educational opportunity by channeling her/him out of programs which are available and valuable to other students. Each new rule or regulation adds to the difficulties faced by Veteran students. It is significant that each year since 1972 the VA had predicted a decline in Veteran enrollment, but that decline was not felt until the full weight of these encroaching regulations was imposed upon schools and VA recipients.

THE SOLUTION

Draft

The solution to these problems is simple. Congress should reaffirm the position it took in passing Section 1788 and 1775 of Title 38 U.S.C. State Educational Agencies will approve programs of education and full-time educational benefits will be paid for those programs to Veteran students who are receiving 14 (12) hours of credit toward their graduation requirements. The school will monitor attendance and satisfactory progress, but shall not be required to submit to additional educational procedures as defined by the Veterans Administration.

ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Since Spring Quarter 1976, Institutions of Higher Learning have suffered a continuous reduction in Veteran student enrollments. This reduction coincides directly with the application of new VA policies and regulations imposed on the educational institutions which began in earnest at that time. These new provisions resulted in an ever-increasing demand on institutional resources and manifested itself in actual encroachment on institutional educational responsibility.

The practical application of these increased requirements imposed a lot of red tape and extra educational demands on those Veterans intending to pursue post secondary educational objectives. This has presented an ever-increasing paradox in that a significant percentage of our States Veteran population is represented by those individuals least inclined to endure, for the sake of education, those convoluted and unnecessary certification procedures. This paradox then is responsible for a growing dissatisfaction on the part of our Veteran target group for educational programs and the G.I. Bill in general, and in turn has created a secondary paradox in that the campus Veteran personnel are prevented from reaching out to the dissatisfied Veteran because of the volume of outside agency paperwork requirements.

PURPOSE

- To return to the original intent and purpose of the G.I. Bill program (as outlined in Title 38, U.S. Code, Section 1788 with regard to certification of Veteran benefits)...
- To return to the original intent and purpose of the Veterans Cost of Instruction Program (recruitment and maintenance of Veteran students)...

- To be relieved from the superfluous and unnecessary burdensome reporting and certification procedures, program approval, etc. imposed by the VA...
- To cause the VA to end its continued encroachment into areas of educational policy which should remain under the control of the educational community (The State Approving Agency and the accredited educational institutions)...

We think that some organized, planned, concerted, and coordinated effort must take place. It is now time to institute such action before the burdens imposed by the VA become unbearable and their inertia becomes uncontrollable. VPAW should take the lead in such efforts but should not attempt to manage them on our own. We need to work together and we need to secure support from others in the education and Veterans communities.

ACTIONS

- (1) As requested by Dr. Harold Heiner, we should all take action to be included with The Evergreen State College and Spokane Falls CC in the injunction. This indicates our position, unity and support with a minimum of risk.
- (2) Read the accompanying issue statement and position paper. Discuss them with appropriate school officials, attach your own endorsement on institution letterhead to the issue statement, and forward it to each member of our Congressional delegation. Also, notify Al Zimmerman when you have done so in order that a collective endorsement may be forwarded on VPAW letterhead.
- (3) We should develop a program to demonstrate the need for and support of V.C.I.P. to insure continued funding. See attached Action Plan 1.

(4) Get Veterans on-campus and in the community to write to Congress demonstrating their support for V.C.I.P. and opposition to VA harassment.

ACTION PLAN I - V.C.I.P.

(1) Write to the attached Congressional leaders explaining the need for continued V.C.I.P. funding. Examples of issues to be addressed in this correspondence are as follows: (a) It costs $77/head to process and maintain a Veteran student. (b) Large numbers of Veterans are unaware of their educational benefits and have not yet made use of them. (c) Increasing need for Veterans advocates on campus because of VA's burdensome regulations. (d) The need for peer councelors who can relate to Veterans. (e) The increased need for aid and services in the areas of career development, employment assistance, discharge review, incarcerated Veterans, dependents, and socially and economically disadvantaged community wide assistance programs.

(2) Get any local Veterans or educational groups in your community to write similar letters of support to the same people.

(3) VPAW will send letters to appropriate State agencies explaining the need for V.C.I.P. funding and seeking their support.

(4) As soon as possible we will prepare an issue statement concerning proposed changes as outlined by the California plan (see attached) for membership review.

(5) We have begun and will continue a program of coordination and correspondence with Veteran Program Administrators from other states to present a united front on these and other issues.

(6) We will begin a similar program of correspondence with appropriate State and National Veterans and educational associations.

(7) You should begin a similar program to secure support from local Veterans organizations.

ATTACHMENT

ACTION PLAN I - V.C.I.P. (Continued)

(8) Any suggestions on items not sufficiently dealt with here will be greatly appreciated if directed to TESC's Veterans Office immediately.

ATTACHMENT

Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

DVB Circular 20-77-97
Appendix G
March 8, 1978

AMENDED UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS PROVISIONS

1. Purpose. This appendix provides instructions for implementing new unsatisfactory progress provisions which have been added to title 38, United States Code, by PL 95-202.

2. General

a. PL 94-502 previously amended title 38 to provide that progress toward completion of a program of education will be considered unsatisfactory if a veteran or eligible person is not progressing at a rate that will allow the student to graduate within the approved length of the program, based on the training time certified to the VA. This provision has been amended further by PL 95-202, effective February 1, 1978, to state that a student's progress will remain satisfactory if it will permit graduation within any other length of time exceeding the approved length of the course that the VA finds to be reasonable (38 U.S.C. 1674 and 1724).

b. The amended law also allows the VA to suspend implementation of all PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress instructions for accredited educational institutions which comply with certain requirements. Such a suspension may be granted for institutions which submit to the VA a course catalog or school bulletin stating institution policies and regulations concerning unsatisfactory progress and conduct, along with a certification that the stated policies and regulations are being enforced by the institution. A suspension will not be granted if the VA finds that the relevant policies and regulations are not fully and clearly stated in the submitted publication. All suspensions will be in effect only until the VA submits to the President and Congress the report, due September 30, 1978, of a required study investigating the need for further legislative or administrative action concerning unsatisfactory progress provisions of the law. This suspension provision is effective November 23, 1977, the date on which PL 95-202 was enacted (PL 95-202, sec. 305(b)(2) and (4)(A)).

c. PL 95-202 further requires the VA to bring to the attention of COPA (Council on Postsecondary Accreditation) and the appropriate accrediting and licensing bodies any catalogs, bulletins or certifications the VA receives, as described above, which fail to state fully and clearly satisfactory progress policies and regulations and which appear not to conform to the standards of such bodies (PL 95-202, sec. 305(b)(4)(B)). This provision is also effective November 23, 1977.

3. Satisfactory Progress - Training Beyond Approved Length of Program. PL 95-202 provides that a student's rate of progress may be considered satisfactory even if the approved length of the course will be exceeded by a "reasonable" period of additional training required for graduation. Such reasonable extensions of training are provided for in current administrative procedures for monitoring satisfactory progress, and these extensions will be used to implement PL 95-202 (see DVB Cir. 20-76-84, app. O, Revised, par. 6). The monitoring procedures are repeated below to illustrate clearly the extensions of training beyond the approved lengths of courses which may be allowed to accumulate before unsatisfactory progress must be reported to the VA. When unsatisfactory progress is reported, mitigating circumstances will be considered as provided in DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix O, Revised, paragraph 9.

a. Schools Organized on a Term Basis With Credit-Hour Measurement: The school will report unsatisfactory progress when a student accumulates unsatisfactory punitive grades in the equivalent of more credit hours than the minimum full-time load for VA purposes (normally 12 or 14 credit hours).

b. Schools Organized on a Term Basis Without Credit-Hour Measurement: The school will report unsatisfactory progress when it is first determined that a student will be required to extend the equivalent of more than one term based on the minimum VA full-time requirement to complete the program.

c. Schools Not Organized on a Term Basis: The school will report unsatisfactory progress when it is first determined that a student will require an extension beyond 10 percent of the approved length of the course to complete the program.

4. Benefit Payments for Extensions Beyond Approved Lengths of Programs

a. Benefits may be paid for training beyond the approved lengths of institution of higher learning (IHL) and non-college-degree (NCD) courses to complete the program, provided that progress remains satisfactory in accordance with the school's approved standards and/or the requirements of PL 94-502 and paragraph 3 of this appendix. In practice, the maximum extensions for which payments will be made are one term of the minimum full-time load for VA purposes, or 10 percent of the approved length of a course not offered on a term basis. When certifying enrollment for such an extension beyond the approved length of a course, schools will show on VA Form 22-1999, Enrollment Certification, the notation "satisfactory progress extension." If any further extension of training is required to complete the course, progress is unsatisfactory and benefits will not be paid except on the recommendation of a VA counseling psychologist after counseling.

EXAMPLE: A student's course is approved for 120 credit hours leading to a BA degree. After the student has attempted 120 credit hours, the program has not been completed because the student received punitive failing grades for 9 credit hours. Progress is satisfactory because the student has not accumulated over 12 credit hours of unsatisfactory punitive grades. The school may certify the student's enrollment in the 9 credit hours required for graduation (plus 3 credit hours to "fill out" the term to full time), and benefits will be paid by the VA. The school's enrollment certification must bear the notation "satisfactory progress extension" to alert the VA of the terms of the enrollment. If accepted by the VA, benefits will be paid based on such an enrollment certification. If further training is required to complete the program (receive a BA degree), the student's progress must be reported as unsatisfactory. Mitigating circumstances will be considered at this point.

b. The 10 percent guideline (see par. 3c) is used solely for monitoring satisfactory progress in flight and apprenticeship/OJT courses. Benefits will not be paid for any extensions beyond the approved lengths of these types of courses. Benefits will not be paid beyond the approved number of lessons for correspondence courses.

c. The approved lengths of apprenticeship/OJT courses are measured in hours. If a trainee does not complete the approved number of hours within the length of an award, the award may be extended to pay VA benefits only up to the approved total hours for the course. This may be done only if the trainee has not been raised to the journeyman wage level.

EXAMPLE: A trainee is enrolled in an on-the-job program, the approved length of which is 4,160 hours. The enrollment certification shows 24 months of training, and the award of

VA benefits is prepared covering that period of time. During the period of the award, the trainee does not work for a total of 160 hours (but continuous enrollment is not interrupted), and therefore the award terminates when the trainee has actually worked only 4,000 hours. (Note that monthly payments would not necessarily have been reduced below full time; only 120 hours per month are required for payment of the full monthly amount.) If the training establishment retains the trainee but does not raise his or her wage to the level paid a trained worker, the award may be extended for 160 hours (i.e., to the approved length of the course, which is 4,160 hours).

5. Suspension of PL 94-502 Unsatisfactory Progress Provisions. Under certain conditions, implementation of the procedures required by DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix O, Revised, and paragraph 3 of this appendix, may be suspended for main campuses, branches, or extensions of educational institutions which are fully accredited by a recognized regional or specialized accrediting body. Such suspensions may be granted while a study is conducted under PL 95-202 to determine the need for further legislative or administrative action regarding unsatisfactory progress provisions. Until the report of this study is submitted to the President and Congress, accredited schools which are granted a suspension may use their own approved standards of progress.

a. An institution requesting a suspension of PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress procedural requirements will submit to the appropriate SAA (State approving agency) a copy of its current course catalog, bulletin, or other publication which explains policies and regulations concerning satisfactory progress and conduct. If the current edition of such publication has already been submitted to the SAA to fulfill any other requirement of the law, a separate copy need not be furnished for the purpose of requesting a suspension.

b. The institution must also submit a statement, signed by the school president or other responsible official, certifying that the policies and regulations in the relevant current publication concerning satisfactory progress and conduct are being enforced by the institution. The certification must identify the applicable policies and regulations by title of the publication which states them, edition number or date of the publication, and page(s) containing the relevant policies. This certification statement must also identify the accrediting body responsible for the school's accreditation and the licensing body (if any) with jurisdiction over the institution. (Note that this certification is separate and distinct from certification of a course catalog or bulletin as true and correct as required by 38 U.S.C. 1775.)

c. The SAA will review the school's policies and regulations concerning satisfactory progress and provide a recommendation to the VA as to whether a suspension of PL 94-502 procedures should be granted. The SAA will forward all material, including copies of the relevant pages of the school publication, to the liaison representative of the VA station having jurisdiction over the school.

d. The liaison representative will conduct a review of the school's policies and regulations to determine if they are "fully and clearly" stated. He or she will also ensure that the certification of enforcement is included and is accurate according to available information. The station Director will then make the decision as to whether a suspension will be granted. All of the following elements must be found in the school's policies and regulations for a suspension to be granted:

(1) The grading system of the institution must be defined, including minimum satisfactory grades.

(a) Grades or credit assigned for completed courses will be specified.

(b) Specific points during the course of study before graduation will be designated for evaluation of student progress. Schools operating on a standard term (semester or quarter) basis must make an evaluation at the end of each term.

(c) For each such evaluation, a minimum grade average, such as GPA (grade point average), or credit level must be specified as satisfactory. Minimum acceptable levels must be logically related to final attainment of the minimum graduation requirements.

(d) There must be a specific requirement that each student's progress will be compared to the minimum standards established for each interval during the course of study.

(2) A statement must be made concerning action to be taken when a student's achievement does not meet an established standard. This statement will include conditions calling for interruption of a student's enrollment, provisions for a probationary period, and conditions for reentrance into the school after dismissal for unsatisfactory progress.

(3) A statement must be made concerning the progress records kept by the institution and furnished the student.

(4) The institution's policies and regulations stating conditions for dismissal for unsatisfactory conduct, and conditions for reentrance into the school after such a dismissal must also appear in the publication.

(NOTE: These criteria do not establish a new set of minimum standards of progress. They are used solely for the purpose of judging whether an accredited school may temporarily suspend implementation of PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress procedures.)

e. If the station Director approves a suspension of PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress procedures, he or she will notify the school by letter, with a copy of the letter being sent to the SAA. This letter will clearly explain that the school's approved standards of progress will be applied to determining and reporting unsatisfactory progress in lieu of PL 94-502 procedures. The school will be reminded that the suspension will be in effect until the school is notified by the VA that the report mentioned in paragraph 2b has been submitted.

(1) If a school issues a new catalog or other publication containing unsatisfactory progress policies and regulations before a suspension terminates, such school must submit a copy of the new publication and a new certification of enforcement through the SAA.

(2) Central office will notify all stations when the report is submitted to the President and Congress. The notification will include instructions for specific actions at that time.

(3) Liaison representatives will be responsible for contacting all schools which were granted a suspension to notify them of the termination date. If the termination date falls within a regular term (semester or quarter) for a school, the suspension for such school will be allowed to continue to the end of the term.

f. If a station Director disapproves suspension of PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress procedures for a school, he or she will inform the school by letter specifically citing the deficiency in the school's standards which caused the suspension to be denied. This letter will also state the VA's intention to bring the deficient school catalog, bulletin, or other publication to the attention of COPA and appropriate accrediting and licensing bodies (see par. 6). School officials will be reminded that all procedures and requirements outlined in DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix O, Revised, must be applied by that school.

(1) A school which is denied a suspension may submit additional or corrected information through the SAA to have the denial reconsidered by the VA station Director.

(2) A school which is denied a suspension and has no additional information to submit may request administrative review of the denial. The request will be made to the station Director who will forward it to the appropriate Field Director (225B) in the VA Central Office.

6. Referrals to COPA and Licensing and Accrediting Bodies. Whenever a station Director denies a suspension of PL 94-502 unsatisfactory progress procedures, such denial will constitute an indication that the school's standards of progress may not be in compliance with the standards of the accrediting body responsible for the institutional accreditation of the school or the licensing body with jurisdiction over the institution, or both. The liaison representative will prepare a letter to the appropriate accrediting and/or licensing body citing the edition of the catalog or bulletin in question and describing what the VA believes to be an inadequacy in the school's standards of progress. Copies of this letter will be sent to the school, the SAA, and the Field Director (225B). The Director of the Education and Rehabilitation Service will be responsible for bringing the matter to the attention of COPA.

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Chief Benefits Director

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Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

DVB Circular 20-77-97
Appendix E
February 13, 1978

CLOCK-HOUR MEASUREMENT FOR NCD COURSES PER PL 95-202

1. Purpose. This appendix provides instructions for implementing the provisions of PL 95-202 concerning the clock-hour measurement of NCD (non-college-degree) courses (38 U.S.C. 1788 (a)). These provisions are effective February 1, 1978.

2. General. PL 95-202 reduced the number of clock-hours required for full-time attendance in accredited NCD courses. It also limited to 5 the number of hours of supervised study which may be counted towards full-time attendance in nonaccredited NCD courses. (Previous instructions in par. 4, app. L, DVB Circular 20-76-84, allowed no supervised study in either accredited or nonaccredited courses.)

3. New Measurement. The following chart illustrates the changes in the clock-hour and supervised study requirements:

	ACCREDITED COURSES		Nonaccredited COURSES		
Training Time	Theory	Shop	Theory	Shop	Max. Supv. Study Hrs.
Full Time	18 or more hrs.	22 or more hrs.	25 or more hrs.	30 or more hrs.	5 or less hrs.
3/4 Time	13-17*	16-21	18-24	22-29	3-3/4
1/2 Time	9-12*	11-15	12-17	15-21	2-1/2
Less than 1/2 more than 1/4	5-8	6-10	7-11	8-14	1-1/4
1/4 or less	1-4	1-5	1-6	1-7	NONE

4. Supervised Study. Supervised study is generally a "study hall" in which students study or work on assigned homework with an instructor present to answer questions. Time spent in supervised study is countable towards the clock-hour measurement of nonaccredited courses only; it is not countable towards the clock-hour measurement of accredited courses. NOTE - Unsupervised study cannot be included in the measurement of any NCD course, whether accredited or nonaccredited.

5. Revised Approvals

a. The station liaison representative must review the approvals of all accredited NCD courses to identify those that would qualify for an increase in training time based on the

*The chart on page 12 of the basic circular has been corrected to reflect proper training time requirements (3/4 and 1/2) for accredited theory courses, as shown above.

course's current approval. (EXAMPLE: A school offers an accredited theory course which is approved for 20 clock-hours per week of attendance. Persons currently enrolled in this course would be receiving benefits at the 3/4-time rate. Under the new measurement provisions, these persons would be entitled to full-time benefits from February 1, 1978.)

b. Schools that change the attendance requirements or include supervised study in a nonaccredited course should contact the SAA (State Approving Agency) to obtain approval. If the SAA finds that a revision is in order, the effective date will be in accordance with the facts found. However, in no event will increased benefits under the liberalized provisions of PL 95-202 be authorized earlier than February 1, 1978. The liaison representative will review all revised approval data received from the SAA to ensure that all requirements of law and VA regulations are met.

c. A VA Form 22-1998b, Approval Information - Accredited NCD Courses or Nonaccredited Courses, will be prepared for each NCD course whose approval information is revised under either subparagraph a or b above.

6. Award Adjustment

The liaison representative will contact all schools for whom a revised VA Form 22-1998b has been prepared as a result of the new measurement provisions.

a. In cases where the current approval of a course would entitle enrollees to a higher training time (see par. 5a), the school will be requested to furnish a list of VA education beneficiaries enrolled in the course. The list should contain the names and file numbers of all Chapter 34 & 35 recipients enrolled on or after February 1, 1978. If the school cannot compile a list because of a large enrollment or other problem, then the liaison representative will request a VA Form 20-8270a, Education Master Record--Audit Writeout, from DPC Hines for the facility involved.

b. When an approval is changed which will affect the measurement of a course (see par. 5b), the school will be advised to furnish a VA Form 22-1999b, Notice of Change of Student Status, for each student enrolled in the course. The revised hours per day, days per week and ending date of the course must be shown.

c. Upon receipt, the lists, master record writeouts or VA Forms 22-1999b will be routed to the Authorization activity for possible award action. If Authorization determines an increase is appropriate based on PL 95-202, the effective date will be in accordance with the facts found but in no event earlier than February 1, 1978.

7. Approval Information

The liaison representative must prepare a VA Form 22-1998b for all accredited courses to reflect the new full-time clock-hour measurements under VAR 14270. This can be accomplished when the folders are initially reviewed (see par. 5a) or can be done as the folders are reviewed in the normal course of business. In either case, a VA Form 22-1998b reflecting the new measurement provisions must be prepared for all accredited courses by October 1, 1978.

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Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

DVB Circular 20-77-16
February 9, 1977
(Confirming Teletype Trans.)

MEASUREMENT FOR PAYMENT PURPOSES
VA REGULATION 14272(D)

1. Effective October 26, 1976, VA Regulation 14272(D) was amended to include: In no case will a course be measured as full time when less than 14 standard class sessions per week (or 12 standard class sessions if 12 credit hours is full time at the school) are required. (See VA Regulation 14200(G) which defines "standard class session".) Likewise, a proportionate number of weekly standard class sessions is required to support an assignment of part-time training.

a. In addition to meeting the credit-hour measurements of VA Regulation 14272(C), a course must also schedule a sufficient number of contact hours to support the assigned training time. Weekly contact hours, excluding any break periods, should be used to determine training time measurement if individual class periods are longer than a standard class session. Equivalent standard class sessions for measurement can be obtained by dividing the number of weekly contact hours by the length of a standard class session.

b. If a school conducts a term shorter than a normal quarter or semester, weekly contact hours of instruction must be increased correspondingly for measurement as an accelerated course under the provisions of VAR 14272(D).

2. The above principle applies to all collegiate undergraduate courses measured on a credit-hour basis regardless of whether they are offered pursuant to a standard semester or standard quarter system. Accordingly, measurement of all applicable courses for academic terms beginning on or after October 26, 1976, are subject to this regulatory provision. Where applicable, overpayments should be created from the beginning of such terms and school liability considered. (Notwithstanding the effective date of this regulatory amendment, this change merely reflects a certification of longstanding Veterans Administration measurement policy rather than new policy.)

3. Although IHL's should still certify credit hours for enrollments, the VA must be able to determine the number of standard class sessions which are scheduled if this may result in reduced training time. Accordingly, all IHL's should be

put on notice that when the equivalent of a standard class session per week for each credit hour granted is not scheduled, the enrollment certification should also report the number of such weekly sessions or the equivalent contact time. This may even require the need to differentiate between academic and laboratory instruction if clock hours are merely reported instead of standard class sessions (e.g., a chemistry course may be given for 3 credits, involve 4 hours of attendance, but yet should only be reported as entailing 3 standard class sessions if there is a 2-hour weekly lab).

4. Since our administrative experience suggests that the measurement of some courses offered by colleges and universities across the nation may be directly affected by this regulatory amendment, special attention should be given to this matter. The amount of contact time scheduled for credit hours granted should be checked during compliance surveys. A spot check of several unit courses against the catalog or most current class schedule will generally suffice unless discrepancies are found or there is some other basis for suspecting a problem in this area.

5. This instruction will necessitate a change to PG 21-1, section M-45, which will be forthcoming.

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Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

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Change 1
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April 21, 1977

MEASUREMENT FOR PAYMENT PURPOSES
VA REGULATION 14272(D)

1. This change is necessary to exclude certain courses from the contact-hour requirements of the circular. Also changed is the earliest date from which overpayments could be considered in accordance with the measurement criteria of the circular.

2. DVB Circular 20-77-16 is changed as follows:

Page 1

Paragraph 1

Lines 5 and 6: Delete "(See VA Regulation 14200(G)...class session'.)".

Line 8: After "training." add

"In effect, VA Regulation 14200(G) defines the term 'standard class session' as the amount of time a student is scheduled in the school's standard length term to spend in class per week for one quarter or one semester hour of credit. Normally, but not necessarily, a standard class session is not less than 1 hour (or 50-minute period) of academic instruction, 2 hours of laboratory training or 3 hours of workshop. (It follows that the length of a standard class session is determined by the school's own academic practices which establish a normal length, not an average length, for each type of class session based on the majority of the school's regularly scheduled programs. Generally, special class schedules for independent study programs, so-called accelerated programs, and night programs should not be considered in determining the length of a standard class session.)"

Paragraph 2

Line 8: Delete "such terms" and insert

"the first term after school officials are put on notice, as provided in paragraph 3,".

Line 10: Delete "certification" and substitute "clarification".

DVB Circular 20-77-16   April 21, 1977
Change 1

Line 12: After "policy.)" add

"(NOTE: This principle does not apply to courses that are specifically dealt with in other VA regulations in a manner which would obviously conflict with its literal application. Consequently, in addition to graduate instruction (VA Regulation 14273), independent study (VA Regulation 14280), work experience courses (VA Regulation 14265), and cooperative courses (VA Regulation 14233(A)), are not subject to this provision.)"

Page 2

Paragraph 3, line 10: After "lab)." add

"Any courses which are exempt pursuant to paragraph 2 should be clearly identified as such when weekly sessions or the equivalent contact time is to be reported."

Paragraph 5, line 2: After "forthcoming." add

"State approving agencies should be requested to review IHL approvals since many courses which are short in instructional contact time (e.g., undergraduate seminars and honor courses) may be approvable as independent study. Proper approval would be directly beneficial when a major portion of the credits are earned through conventional study. (See VA Regulation 14280(B) and M22-2, pt. VI, ch. 4, par. 4.04h, regarding the measurement of independent study courses.)"

A. J. BOCHICCHIO
Acting Chief Benefits Director

Distribution: CO: RPC 2900
FD FLD: RPC 2223 plus VBC and VRCC,
1 each and DVBE (IHL), 1 each
EX: HNSC and AR, 1 each

Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

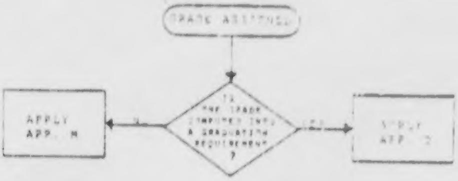
DVB Circular 20-76-84
Appendix O, Revised
February 3, 1978

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS
(PUBLIC LAW 94-502)

1. Purpose. This appendix provides instructions for implementing the Public Law 94-502 provision pertaining to unsatisfactory progress under chapters [32,] 34 and 35.

2. General. [A student must maintain satisfactory progress to continue to be eligible to receive educational benefits under chapters 32, 34 and 35. If progress is unsatisfactory according to the established policy of the school, the law requires the institution to report this to the Veterans Administration.] PL 94-502 [amended] 38 U.S.C. 1674 and 1724 effective December 1, 1976, to expand the concept of unsatisfactory progress to include those students not progressing at a rate that will permit graduation within the approved length of the course, based upon the training time paid by the VA. This provision may be waived for individual students if there is a VA finding of mitigating or extenuating circumstances. [Schools must determine progress under the standards of PL 94-502, in addition to their own standards, unless exempt under paragraph 4.]

3. [Distinction Between Appendixes M and O. The provisions of this appendix are not to be confused with the provisions of DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix M. Although each appendix requires a review of grades assigned, only one appendix can be applied to any one grade as shown below:



.]

4. [Exemptions]

a. [Adequate Standards of Progress. If a particular school's standards of progress are considered by the VA to be adequate to meet this provision of law, and if the SAA (State approving agency) recommends it, that school may be exempted from the specific procedures outlined in this appendix (pars. 6 through 11). The VA regional office Director may grant this exemption if the school, under its established monitoring and reporting procedures, would notify the VA of unsatisfactory progress by the time the student accumulates unsatisfactory punitive grades in more hours than the school's minimum full-time requirement (normally 12 or 14 hours for VA purposes). See paragraphs 6 and 7.

> NOTE: Approval of a school's standards of progress under VAR 14253 and/or VAR 14254 does not automatically guarantee that this is the case.]

b. [Nonpunitive Grading System. If a school has approved standards of progress and uses a nonpunitive grading system (i.e., never assigns an unsatisfactory punitive grade), the regional office Director may grant an exemption.

(1) Unit subjects for which a nonpunitive grade is assigned are equivalent to audited courses (see DVB Circular 20-76-84, app. M). For such unit subjects, either

(a) Benefits are not payable, or

(b) Mitigating circumstances are found to exist.

(2) Since such unit subjects are not relevant to a consideration of unsatisfactory progress under the standards of PL 94-502, schools with a nonpunitive grading system may be exempted from the specific procedures in this appendix (i.e., counting unsatisfactory punitive grades).]

5. [Implementation of Exemptions]

a. [To receive an exemption from the procedures in this appendix, the school must apply to the SAA for an exemption. The SAA will forward the school's application to the VA with a recommendation for approval or denial.]

b. [The regional office Director will advise both the school and the SAA whether the school is exempt or not exempt from the monitoring requirements under PL 94-502. In the case of an adverse decision, the school will be notified of the right to an administrative review by Central Office (225B).]

c. [The liaison representative will maintain a log for purposes of a later report to Central Office and will file the appropriate documentation in the approval folder. The following information will be recorded in the log:

(1) Name of school;

(2) Approximate VA enrollment;

(3) Application approved or denied; and

(4) Reason for approval or denial.]

6. [Monitoring Unsatisfactory Progress Under PL 94-502. Unless exempted under paragraph 4, the school will monitor each student's progress under this provision.]

a. [School Organized on a Term Basis With Credit-Hour Measurement. The school will report unsatisfactory progress when the student accumulates unsatisfactory punitive grades (see par. 7) in the equivalent of more credit hours than the minimum full-time load for VA purposes (normally 12 or 14 hours).]

b. [School Organized on a Term Basis Without Credit-Hour Measurement. The school will report unsatisfactory progress when it is first determined that the student will be required to extend the equivalent of more than one term based on the minimum full-time requirement.

c. School Not Organized on a Term Basis. The school will report unsatisfactory progress when it is first determined that the student will require an extension beyond 10 percent of the approved length of the course to complete the program.

NOTE: The 10 percent guideline is used for monitoring progress; payment beyond the approved length is not allowed for flight, apprenticeship/OJT or correspondence courses.]

7. Unsatisfactory[Punitive Grades. An "unsatisfactory grade" is defined as a punitive grade that is unacceptable for graduation based on the policies of the school.

a. The following grades are considered as unsatisfactory grades:

(1) Punitive failing grades (i.e., an "F" or the equivalent); and

(2) Punitive grade below that required by the school (e.g., a "D" when the school requires a "C").

b. An incomplete grade (usually designated an "I") is disregarded when monitoring progress under PL 94-502 because it reflects neither satisfactory nor unsatisfactory work. (See chg. 5 to DVB Cir. 20-76-84. The procedures in par. 4f, app. M, remain in effect.)

c. A nonpunitive grade is also disregarded when monitoring progress under PL 94-502 because either benefits are not payable or mitigating circumstances are found. (See DVB Circular 20-76-84, app. M, for procedures regarding nonpunitive grades.)]

8. [School Reporting

a. When the school determines that a student's progress is unsatisfactory under this provision of PL 94-502, the report to the VA should indicate that unsatisfactory progress is due to an extension of training beyond the approved length of the course.

b. When reporting unsatisfactory progress under this provision, the school should also show any circumstances which they feel the VA may consider as possible mitigating circumstances.

c. Schools that are exempt under paragraph 4 are not affected by this provision. Such schools will report unsatisfactory progress based on their own standards and without showing mitigating circumstances.]

9. [VA Determination of Mitigating Circumstances

a. A student is considered to be making satisfactory progress if, after progress is reported as unsatisfactory under paragraph 6 of this appendix, there is an Adjudication determination of mitigating or extenuating circumstances.

b. Mitigating circumstances are not for consideration if progress is unsatisfactory under school standards (e.g., GPA (grade point average)). Nor are mitigating circumstances for consideration if the school is exempt from the unsatisfactory progress procedures of this appendix (see par. 4).

c. Mitigating circumstances include the following:

(1) Personal illness.

(2) Illness or death in the immediate family.

(3) Geographical transfer or a change in hours or conditions of employment.

(4) Financial emergency.

(5) Failure to satisfactorily complete a deficiency or remedial course without fault.

(6) Active duty military service, including active duty for training.

(7) Any other circumstances beyond the student's control which hampers pursuit of a course.

d. Mitigating circumstances under this provision should not be confused with mitigating circumstances under 38 U.S.C. 1780(a) which prohibits payment for courses not counted to satisfy graduation requirements (see DVB Circular 20-76-84, app. M). Mitigating circumstances may apply under one provision or the other, but not both since they are mutually exclusive.

(1) Mitigating circumstances under this provision deal with unsatisfactory progress and only affect courses for which punitive grades are assigned.

(2) Mitigating circumstances under 38 U.S.C. 1780(a) deal with prohibition of payment and only affect courses for which nonpunitive grades are assigned.]

10. Unsatisfactory Progress Reported With Mitigating Circumstances. If a claim of mitigating circumstances is received from a student or if the school notice indicates possible mitigating circumstances, the Adjudication activity will follow the procedures outlined below:

a. When the information concerning mitigating circumstances is not sufficient to make a determination, development will be required and, if there is a running award, benefits will be suspended.

(1) The circumstances which are claimed to have caused the unsatisfactory progress will be developed by means of a dictated letter to the student requesting a written statement explaining the extenuating circumstances including the unit subjects involved.

(2) The student will also be advised of the reason for the suspension of benefits, if benefits were suspended, and advised that if the requested statement is not received in 30 days, it will be necessary to terminate the award on the basis of unsatisfactory progress.

b. If it is determined that mitigating circumstances exist, benefits will be resumed, if previously suspended. The school will be notified of the unit subject(s) which will be disregarded, because of the mitigating circumstances, in any future determination of unsatisfactory progress.

c. If it is determined that no mitigating circumstances exist, benefits will be terminated, if not already in a terminated status. The student will be notified by FL 22-337, unless an application (VA Form 22-1995, 22-5495 or 22-5495W) has already been submitted. In that instance, the case will be referred to the Counseling activity and the student will be notified by dictated letter of the termination and will be advised that a counseling appointment will be scheduled.]

11. [Unsatisfactory Progress Reported Without Mitigating Circumstances. When unsatisfactory progress is reported without any indication of mitigating circumstances, the Adjudication activity will terminate benefits if there is a running award. The student will be advised by dictated letter (or FL 22-337) in which the following sentences (or the equivalent) will be included: "If you feel that there are extenuating circumstances surrounding your unsatisfactory progress, you should submit a written statement explaining those circumstances. Identify each unit subject affected by title and number (e.g., Math 101)."]

12. [Counseling. If educational benefits are terminated due to a determination of unsatisfactory progress, VA counseling is required before benefits may be reinstated even if the student continues in the same course at the same school (see VAR 14278). If the VA counseling psychologist determines that the cause of the unsatisfactory progress has been removed and that the program that the beneficiary proposes is suitable to his or her aptitudes, interests and abilities, benefits may be reinstated effective the date such conditions were met as determined by the counseling psychologist, or the date of reentrance, whichever is later. The effective date may be a future date, date of the counseling session or a retroactive date, depending on the circumstances in the individual case.

13. Effective Date. This change affects all enrollment periods beginning on or after December 1, 1976. Enrollment periods prior to that are not for consideration under this change.

14. RESCISSION: Appendix O, dated December 17, 1976, to DVB Circular 20-76-84.]

Dorothy L. Starbuck
DOROTHY L. STARBUCK
Chief Benefits Director

Distribution: CO: RPC 2900
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Department of Veterans Benefits
Veterans Administration
Washington, D. C. 20420

DVB Circular 20-76-84
Appendix M
(Confirming Teletype Trans.)
December 10, 1976

PROHIBITION OF EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS FOR COURSES NOT COUNTED TO SATISFY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Purpose. This appendix provides instructions for the implementation of the provisions of PL 94-502 which prohibit payment of educational benefits for auditing a course or for a course which is not used in computing graduation requirements, including any course from which the student withdraws, unless there is a finding of mitigating circumstances causing the withdrawal.

2. General. PL 94-502 amends title 38 U.S.C. 1780(a), to provide that, effective December 1, 1976, no payment of educational benefits will be made to an eligible veteran or person for audited courses or courses for which the grade assigned is not used in computing graduation requirements. This includes prohibition of payments for courses from which the eligible veteran or person withdraws, unless the Administrator finds mitigating circumstances involved in the withdrawal.

3. Definitions. Proper implementation of these statutory provisions will be facilitated if the following concepts are used in determinations concerning benefit payments:

a. Audited Courses: Any course which a student attends with a prior understanding between school officials and the student that such attendance will not result in credit being granted toward graduation. Because no credit toward an educational objective can be earned for such a course, it is not properly a part of the student's approved educational program.

b. Nonpunitive Grade: Any grade assigned for pursuit of a course, whether upon completion of the course or at the time of withdrawal from it, which has the effect of excluding the course from any consideration in determining progress toward fulfillment of requirements for graduation. No credit toward graduation would be granted for such a grade, nor would there be any effect on other graduation factors imposed by school policy, such as a grade point average. A course for which a nonpunitive grade is assigned is thus equivalent to an audited course for purposes of advancement toward graduation.

c. Punitive (Failing) Grade: A grade assigned for pursuit of a course which indicates unacceptable course work and no credit granted toward graduation for that pursuit. Although this type of grade results in no credit, it is distinguished from a nonpunitive grade by the fact that it is considered in determining overall progress toward graduation in that a penalty is exacted on a school graduation requirement, such as grade point average. A course for which a punitive failing grade is assigned is not equivalent to an audited course because the grade is computed into a graduation requirement.

d. Drop-Add Period: A reasonably brief period at the beginning of a term (not to exceed 30 days) officially designated by a school for unrestricted enrollment changes by students.

e. Mitigating Circumstances: Circumstances which directly hinder eligible veteran's or person's pursuit of a course and which are judged to be out of the student's control. Following are some general categories of mitigating circumstances (this list is not all-inclusive):

(1) Serious illness of the eligible veteran or person.

(2) Serious illness or death in the eligible veteran's or person's immediate family.

(3) Immediate family or financial obligations which require a change in terms, hours, or place of employment which precludes pursuit of a course.

(4) Discontinuance of a course by a school.

(5) Active duty military service, including active duty for training.

(6) Withdrawal from a course or receipt of a nonpunitive grade upon completion of a course due to unsatisfactory work may be considered to be under mitigating circumstances if the student can demonstrate good faith pursuit of the course up to the point of withdrawal or completion and the student submits evidence that he or she applied for tutorial aid, consulted a Veterans Administration counselor, or consulted a school academic counselor or advisor regarding an attempt to remedy the unsatisfactory work before withdrawal or completion.

4. Payment and Termination Actions. Depending on the type of grade assigned, the point during a term when a student withdraws, and/or the presence of mitigating circumstances, payment or award termination actions will be determined as follows:

a. No VA educational assistance will be paid for an audited course. This is consistent with long-standing VA policy, the only difference being that the policy is now expressed in the statute. Schools should never certify audited courses to the VA for payment of benefits. Such certifications, if they occur, will be considered false for purposes of considering school liability for overpayments.

b. If an eligible veteran or person withdraws from a course after the institution's drop-add period, receives a nonpunitive grade for that course, and mitigating circumstances are not found, benefits for that course will be terminated effective the first date of enrollment or December 1, 1976, whichever is later.

c. If an eligible veteran or person completes a course but receives a nonpunitive (no credit or no failure) grade, and mitigating circumstances are not found, benefits for that course will be terminated effective the first date of enrollment or December 1, 1976, whichever is later.

d. As noted in subparagraphs a and b above, no overpayments will be created in accordance with these provisions for any period prior to December 1, 1976. School liability provisions will not be applied to overpayments resulting from withdrawals or nonpunitive grades unless a school fails to report changes in student status timely in accordance with VA regulations and administrative requirements.

e. If an eligible veteran or person withdraws from a course before the end of an institution's drop-add period regardless of circumstances, withdraws from a course and mitigating circumstances are shown, or withdraws from a course under circumstances such that a punitive grade is or will be assigned for that course, reduction of benefits will be effective at the end of the month or the end of the term in which the withdrawal occurs, whichever is earlier. If the eligible person or veteran terminates all courses under these same conditions, termination of benefits will be effective the last date of pursuit. Last date of pursuit in a residence course is the last date of attendance.

f. If an eligible veteran or person terminates a correspondence, flight, farm cooperative, cooperative, or job-training course, termination of benefits will be effective on the following dates:

(1) Correspondence Training: Date last lesson serviced.

(2) Flight Training: Date last instruction received.

(3) Farm Cooperative Training: Date of last classroom attendance.

(4) Cooperative Training: Date of last training.

(5) Job Training: Date of last training.

5. Mitigating Circumstances - Reporting, Development, and Award Actions. As indicated previously, the involvement of mitigating circumstances in a student's termination or reduction of training will affect adjustment of the award of benefits.

a. All schools will be encouraged to show mitigating circumstances, provided this information is known, and the grade which is or will be assigned for the course(s) involved, when reporting training time reductions or terminations. Item 3C, Remarks, on VA Form 22-1999B or 22-1999B-1, Notice of Change in Student Status - Institutional Courses Only, will be used for this purpose. It should be pointed out to schools that their cooperation in this regard will avoid retroactive termination of benefits, if there were satisfactory mitigating circumstances, to the beginning of the course(s) from which withdrawn, and thus aid the veteran by maintaining proper benefit payments.

b. If the school shows acceptable mitigating circumstances, benefits will be reduced at the end of the month in which the reduction occurs if the student continues a part of his/her course, or terminated effective last date of pursuit when there is an interruption or discontinuance of all unit subjects with no further action required.

c. If mitigating circumstances are not shown on the notice of withdrawal or termination, reduction will be at end of the month in which reduction in training occurs or termination of the award will be effective last date of pursuit, and the following further actions will be required:

(1) A form or dictated development letter will be sent to the student (the computer-generated reduction or termination letter will be allowed to issue). The development letter will indicate the action taken and explain that the student will receive a computer-generated letter showing months of entitlement remaining, amount overpaid (if any), and information concerning repayment and waiver request. The student will be invited to give his or her statement regarding possible mitigating circumstances (not further specified) involved in the reduction or termination of training. Finally, the student will be advised that if no response is received by the VA within 30 days, reduction or termination of benefits will be made effective the beginning date of the course(s) involved, resulting in creation of an overpayment or additional overpayment. (NOTE: A new VA Form Letter will be developed for this purpose. Until it is available, modified current form letters or dictated letters must be used.)

(2) Each case developed in this manner will be placed under pending end product control for 30 days using end product code 220. (NOTE: A one-time code 220 may not be recorded in addition to establishing the pending 220 control.) If no response is received during this period, or if the student's claim of mitigating circumstances is not judged to be satisfactory, amended award action will be taken to reduce or terminate benefits effective the beginning date of the course(s) involved and final action recorded on the end product code 220. The computer-generated letter will be allowed to issue to explain remaining entitlement, amount of overpayment, etc., but a form or dictated letter must also be issued to explain the reason for retroactive termination or reduction of benefits. If mitigating circumstances are established, final action will be recorded on the pending end product code 220.

(3) The potential abuse of the provision for mitigating circumstances in order to obtain benefits otherwise not payable is obvious. Therefore, if a pattern of withdrawals or termanations develops with mitigating circumstances shown or claimed in each instance, the student will be required to submit a signed statement of circumstances before any further favorable judgments can be made. Other corroborative

evidence, such as statements from employers or physicians, may also be required if deemed necessary. For purposes of this provision, a pattern of withdrawals or terminations will exist upon the third occurrence within a term or the third occurrence in consecutive terms.

RUFUS H. WILSON
Chief Benefits Director

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Form Approved
OMB No. [illegible]

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN STUDENT STATUS – INSTITUTIONAL COURSES ONLY

(Under Chapter 32, 34 or 35, Title 38, U.S.C.)

1. FIRST NAME-MIDDLE NAME-LAST NAME OF STUDENT	2. VA FILE NUMBER *(For Ch. 35 include suffix)*

This form is to be used by the school certifying official to report any change in status as required by 38 CFR 21.4203

3. TERMINATION (IF NON-DEGREE PROGRAM – *report date(s) and total absences not previously reported in "Remarks."*)

A. LAST DATE OF ATTENDANCE

B. REASON FOR TERMINATION

- ☐ WITHDRAWAL OR INTERRUPTION (NON-COLLEGE)
- ☐ WITHDRAWAL DURING DROP ADD PERIOD *(Not exceeding 30 days)*
- ☐ WITHDRAWAL AFTER DROP ADD PERIOD—NONPUNITIVE GRADES ASSIGNED *(If checked, complete Item 6)*
- ☐ WITHDRAWAL AFTER DROP ADD PERIOD—PUNITIVE GRADES ASSIGNED
- ☐ END OF TERM OR COURSE
- ☐ UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS
- ☐ OTHER *(Explain in "Remarks")*

4. ADJUSTMENT OF CREDIT OR CLOCK HOURS *(Complete Items 4A and 4B and Items 4C-4I as applicable)*

A. DATE ADJUSTMENT IS EFFECTIVE

B. TYPE OF ADJUSTMENT

- ☐ INCREASE
- ☐ REDUCTION (NON-COLLEGE)
- ☐ REDUCTION DURING DROP ADD PERIOD *(Not exceeding 30 days)*
- ☐ REDUCTION AFTER DROP ADD PERIOD—NONPUNITIVE GRADES ASSIGNED *(If checked, complete Item 6)*
- ☐ REDUCTION AFTER DROP ADD PERIOD—PUNITIVE GRADES ASSIGNED
- ☐ OTHER *(Explain in "Remarks")*

C. CREDIT HOURS BEFORE ADJUSTMENT	D. CREDIT HOURS AFTER ADJUSTMENT	E. TRAINING TIME AFTER ADJUSTMENT *(Check ONLY [illegible])* ☐ FULL TIME ☐ 3/4 TIME ☐ 1/2 TIME ☐ LESS THAN 1/2 TIME ☐ 1/4 TIME OR LESS

F. CLOCK HOURS OR HIGH SCHOOL UNITS BEFORE ADJUSTMENT	G. CLOCK HOURS OR HIGH SCHOOL UNITS AFTER ADJUSTMENT	H. NUMBER OF DAYS PER WEEK AFTER ADJUSTMENT *(Complete for non-degree courses only)*	I. REVISED ENDING DATE

5. CHARGES FOR PERIOD OF ENROLLMENT *(Complete this item for all in-service students and for students whose training load after adjustment is less than 1/2 time. List customary charges of the ADJUSTED load for school year, term or other period)*

A. PERIOD	B. TUITION	C. FEES

6. MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES *(Complete only if indicated by Item 3 or 4)*

DOES THE STUDENT CLAIM THAT MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES WERE INVOLVED IN THE TERMINATION OR ADJUSTMENT ACTION?

☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ UNKNOWN *(If "Yes," state specific mitigating circumstances in "Remarks" or attach statement from student)*

7. REMARKS

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the student's status changed on the date indicated and in accordance with the facts shown above

8A. DATE SIGNED	8B. SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF CERTIFYING OFFICIAL	8C. NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL OR TRAINING ESTABLISHMENT

VA FORM
AUG 1977 **22-1999b**

SUPERSEDES VA FORM 22-1999b, OCT 1976,
WHICH WILL NOT BE USED

VA COPY 1

[illegible]

May 30, 1978

TO: Members of the Chancellor's Veterans Administration Advisory Committee and Other Persons Invited to Meet with Dr. William Shannon on Thursday, June 15

FROM: Thomas M. Shay, CCJCA
Gary M. Gallery, Chancellor's Office

SUBJECT: Purpose of the Meeting with Dr. Shannon

Dr. William Shannon, a private consultant, has contracted with the Veterans Administration to do a nationwide study of the impact of two areas of VA regulations on colleges and universities. The areas to be studied are: "seat-time" regulations and "satisfactory progress" regulations. In late June, Dr. Shannon will prepare a report to the Veterans Administration, in which he will recommend possible changes in VA regulations in these two areas, as well as changes in related federal statutes.

It is very important that California community colleges have major input into this study. CCJCA, the Chancellor's Office, and the Washington, D.C., office of the California Community Colleges Federal Affairs Council are in close communication with Dr. Shannon on this project. At his request, and after conferring with many of you regarding dates, a meeting with Dr. Shannon is set for 9:30 a.m., Thursday, June 15. We will meet in the meeting room at the CCJCA office, 2017 "O" Street, Sacramento. We estimate that the meeting will close by 3:30 p.m.

Dr. Shannon has indicated that he needs information in the following categories:

1. Suggested modifications of VA regulations and of federal statutes concerning the VA;
2. VA forms or reporting requirements with which districts and colleges have particular difficulties;
3. State, district and college definitions and policies and procedures statements related to:
    a. "Seat-time" regulations;
    b. "Satisfactory progress" regulations;
    c. Recordkeeping related to veterans;

4. Procedures used to assure that college catalogs are in compliance with VA regulations;

5. Computerized programs (if any) used in keeping records on veterans;

6. Lawsuits related to VA regulations;

7. Any other relevant information.

Dr. Shannon has indicated that it would be very helpful for him to have copies of written materials which are available concerning the items listed above. For example, participants in the meeting might supply copies of definitions and policy statements; copies of forms used in districts; copies of relevant correspondence; written descriptions of, or printouts from, computerized programs; other relevant materials.

It would be especially helpful if participants in the meeting will bring written, specific suggestions for needed changes in VA regulations and related statutes.

If you are not able to attend the meeting, but have suggestions to make, or written materials to share, please send them either to Gary Gallery or Tom Shay, and we will make sure that Dr. Shannon receives them.

It would also be very helpful if you could write or call the CCJCA office to let us know whether you will be able to attend the June 15 meeting.

THS/GMG:nkb

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE ASSOCIATION
2017 "O" Street • Sacramento, California 95814 • (916) 444-8641 • Executive Director, Lloyd E. Messersmith

June 6, 1978

TO: All Persons Invited to Meet with Dr. William Shannon on Thursday, June 15

FROM: Thomas M. Shay, CCJCA

SUBJECT: Discussion Guide for the Meeting on Veterans Administration "Standards of Progress" and "Seat Time" Provisions

We have just received from Dr. William Shannon, who is conducting the nationwide study, a guide for the discussion on June 15 at the CCJCA office. This discussion guide (enclosed) provides additional detail, which supplements the information provided in our memorandum of May 30.

If you are not able to attend the June 15 meeting, Dr. Shannon would greatly appreciate any written response you wish to make to the questions posed in the discussion guide.

TMS:nkb

Enclosure

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE ASSOCIATION
2017 "O" Street • Sacramento, California 95814 • (916) 444-8641 • Executive Director, Lloyd E. Messersmith

June 7, 1976

TO: Dr. William G. Shannon
Mr. Leland W. Myers

FROM: Thomas M. Shay, Coordinator, Special Projects

SUBJECT: Arrangements for June 15 Meeting in Sacramento on VA Regulations

Enclosed are several items relevant to the meeting. These include a copy of the first memorandum to potential participants, a copy of a follow-up memorandum which includes Bill's discussion guide, a list of the members of the Chancellor's Veterans Administration Advisory Committee, and a list of persons contacted by telephone regarding meeting date and content. On the latter list I have written in some indications of whether persons feel they will be able to attend.

Gary M. Gallery, Legal Counsel for the Chancellor's Office, plans to attend the meeting. Our best estimate at this time is that there will be 12 to 15 persons in attendance at the June 15 meeting.

TMS:kab

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Gary M. Gallery

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES

BAKERSFIELD CHICO DOMINGUEZ HILLS FRESNO FULLERTON HAYWARD HUMBOLDT
POMONA SACRAMENTO SAN BERNARDINO SAN DIEGO SAN FRANCISCO SAN JOSE

LONG BEACH LOS ANGELES NORTHRIDGE
SAN LUIS OBISPO SONOMA STANISLAUS

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR
(213) 590-5555

June 5, 1978

Mr. William G. Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Dear Bill:

Attached is a copy of the memorandum sent out regarding the meeting on June 13. As you can see, the invitation list has been expanded considerably. I am sure you are aware of "protocol" and its many effects! To assist in your data collection, I have also arranged for you to meet with a group of our campus veterans coordinators from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the 13th. Between the two meetings, you should get a good idea of where the problems are and what changes would be helpful.

Also enclosed is a map with directions for reaching our office. Please come to room 110 when you arrive. I am looking forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Susan

Susan Hunter
Assistant Dean
Student Affairs

SH:pb
Enclosures

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES
Office of the Chancellor
400 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802
(213) 590-5708

Code: SA 78-47

Date: May 31, 1978

To: Presidents

From: Alex C. Sherriffs
Vice Chancellor
Academic Affairs

Subject: June 13 Meeting with William Shannon

William Shannon, former Vice President of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, has been selected by the Veterans Administration to prepare the Congressionally mandated study on "contact hours" (seat time) and "standards of progress." Mr. Shannon has requested an opportunity to meet with representatives of California higher education to discuss our concerns with these two issues. I am pleased to invite you and/or appropriate staff (e.g., Veterans Coordinators, Deans/Directors of Admissions and Records, Registrars) to participate in this meeting.

The meeting with Mr. Shannon has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 13 beginning at 9:00 a.m. and will be held in the Trustees Plenary Room at the Chancellor's Office.

Mr. Shannon is interested in hearing our concerns with both the legislation establishing these two policies and with the V.A. regulations promulgated to implement the legislation. He would also appreciate your bringing the following information in writing:

1. A brief description of your current campus situation including demographic data on total enrollment and veterans enrollment.

Distribution:

ATTENTION: DEANS/DIRECTORS, ADMISSIONS & RECORDS
VETERANS COORDINATORS
REGISTRARS
Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs
Deans of Students
Chancellor's Office
Administration Information Center

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES
Office of the Chancellor
400 Golden Shore
Long Beach, California 90802
(213) 590-5545

Code: SA 78-61

Date: June 30, 1978

To: Deans of Students

From: David Kagan
State University Dean
Student Affairs

Subject: Summary Notes of June 13, 1978 Meeting on Veterans Administration Policies

On June 13, representatives from CSUC campuses and the Chancellor's Office met with Dr. William Shannon to discuss the congressionally mandated study of Veterans Administration policies on "academic standards of progress" and "contact hours." (See SA 78-47, May 31, 1978). Notes from that meeting and a list of persons in attendance are attached for your information.

The first draft of Dr. Shannon's study is to be submitted to the Veterans Administration on July 7 with the final report due July 21. The Veterans Administration will then submit its report to Congress by September 30.

Concern has been expressed that Dr. Shannon's report and the resulting Veterans Administration report may not be made public. Campuses may wish to communicate with the Veterans Administration or appropriate members of Congress and request that both reports be made available to interested persons.

Questions regarding this information should be directed to Ms. Susan Hunter, Assistant Dean, Student Affairs.

DK:pb
Attachment

Distribution: Presidents
Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs
Deans and Directors, Admissions & Records
Registrars
Veterans Coordinators
Chancellor's Office Staff
Administration Information Center

ATTACHMENT
SA 78-61
June 30, 1978

MEETING NOTES

July 13 Meeting With Dr. William Shannon
Trustees Plenary Room
Office of the Chancellor

After introductions, Dr. Shannon outlined the scope of the congressionally-mandated study of VA standards of progress and contact hour provisions. The study will be presented to the VA by July 21, 1978. The VA will then make its report to Congress by September 30.

In the study, Dr. Shannon is looking for positive recommendations for revising both the legislation and the implementing regulations to alieviate the current problems with the G.I. Bill. Congress is seeking solutions to these problems while at the same time curbing abuses. Following introductory comments by Dr. Shannon and the distribution of a list of issues, the discussion was opened. The following is a summary of comments and recommendations made by those in attendance.

A. Standards of Progress

1. The major problem with V.A. regulations is that they try to cover all types of institutions. Policies regulating non-degree granting institutions (e.g. a barber college) are considerably different from a State University. Institutions should be categorized and separate VA policies should be developed for each category.
2. It was recommended that campuses, upon approval of the State Approving Agency, be allowed to utilize their own standards of progress.
3. The regulations are poorly written, verbose, and confusing. The continual stream of "clarifying memos," appendices, and changes only add to the confusion.
4. The policy on termination of benefits should be modified to defer termination until circumstances of the case have been reviewed. Presently, benefits are terminated upon receipt of the campuses' notice of unsatisfactory progress.

Mitigating circumstances are not investigated until later. This investigation often results in the reinstatement of benefits. The unnecessary cut-off of benefits could be eliminated or substantially reduced by modifying the procedure.

5. Although institutional academic policy includes "F" grades in determining satisfactory progress, subsequent academic achievement can overcome such deficiencies. However, under current VA standards of progress, veterans benefits would be terminated after 12 units of "F" are accumulated even though the student's G.P.A. and progress points indicate satisfactory progress.

6. The VA does not allow sufficient time for making up academic deficiencies.

7. Since the veteran has only a limited amount of benefits available, it was recommended that he/she be allowed to determine how these benefits will be used.

8. There are significant delays in the V.A. counseling process -- up to six months in many cases. Despite written policies to the contrary, campuses have been informed by regional VA offices that on-campus counseling services can not be utilized to satisfy the counseling requirement. It was recommended that on-campus counseling services be allowed to satisfy the V.A. counseling requirement in standards of progress determinations and other areas as appropriate.

9. Statements of mitigating circumstances submitted by campuses with notices of unsatisfactory progress appear to be ignored by the V.A.

10. It was recommended that the V.A.'s divisions for adjudication and counseling be separated administratively.

11. It was recommended that the V.A. modify its method of evaluating campus-based employees. Currently, number of veteran contacts is a major factor in evaluating staff. Campus Vet Reps are chastised if they have not had a certain number of contacts per month.

12. It was recommended that VA adjudicators specialize in specific policy areas to achieve consistency in adjudication decisions and interpretations.

13. It was recommended that the roles of the VA and the State Approving Agencies be reviewed. SAA's often abdicate to the VA their responsibilities for approving programs.

14. It was recommended that institutions supply the VA with transcripts and grade reports, and that the VA enforce its own standards of progress.

B. Contact Hours

1. CSU, Dominguez Hills offers a BA and MA in Humanities through an external degree program. It is a faculty directed independent study program with academic requirements equal to or above the regular classroom offerings. The VA will not recognize this program as a full-time academic program. Suggestions made to the VA have not been accepted. The VA appears unable to deal with non-traditional forms of higher education. It was recommended that the VA employ more persons knowledgeable about higher education, particularly in areas involved in educational policy development.

2. The VA was commended for its recent efforts to distribute drafts of regulations to eight regional offices for discussion and review prior to developing final regulations. However, it was recommended that the practice of distributing drafts of regulations to the field be expanded.

3. It was recommended that contact hours be measured by completed coursework.

4. The question was raised as to the role of accrediting agencies in policing institutional academic standards.

C. Record Keeping

1. Current record-keeping requirements are expensive, but the work can be done. However, the cost of record-keeping required under the latest VA standards of progress would be prohibitive. In addition, service to non-vets would be significantly diminished as Admissions and Records staff would need to be diverted to VA matters. It was suggested that the VA be responsible for enforcing its own standards of

progress rather than shifting the burden to the educational institutions.

2. Current VA efforts at record-keeping are inadequate. Materials sent to campuses (e.g. lists of overpayment cases) are often in error.

3. The current V.A. certification process is cumbersome and results in the delay of benefit payments to some students. This is particularly true for those students ineligible for advance pay.

D. Safeguards

Under current VA policies, a student is not able to fail a class or change a major without encountering difficulties with the VA. Occasional failing grades, changes of major, or changes in educational objectives should not be equated as abuses of educational benefits.

2. The cost of implementing VA regulations is high. Reporting fees do not cover certification, let alone the other regulations.

3. A periodic review of transcripts by the VA could be useful in reducing overpayments.

4. The VA should focus its efforts on curbing abuses on those types of institutions that are known to be operating in a questionable fashion. Issuing sweeping mandates that result in an unnecessary expenditure of institutional and VA dollars should be avoided.

5. It was recommended that the VA modify its current policy which allows dependents to certify themselves without campus verification.

6. There is a need to determine whether VA benefits should be considered as an entitlement. If it is an entitlement, then the veteran should be able to utilize the funds for any educational course which would benefit him or her without necessarily having a direct application to a specific program.

7. The VA appears to be unaware of several educational trends. For example, the average student changes major four times during a college career; the VA allows only one change of major.

Additional Recommendations

It was also recommended by several in attendance that:

1. The VA develop a brochure on what is expected from veterans in order to receive educational benefit payments.
2. The VA publish a catalog of VA circulars and regulations. The current numbering system used is confusing to campus personnel.
3. The VA's memos, circulars, and other public documents be more clearly and concisely written.
4. The VA alter its policy of sending a series of changes to various circulars. It was suggested that after three or four changes to a particular policy, an amended copy of the circular be distributed.
5. Channels of communication within VA regional offices and between the VA central office and regional offices be improved to ensure timeliness and consistencv.
6. The chain of responsibility for implementing VA policy or legislation should be the VA, the veteran and finally the educational institution, rather than the reverse.
7. Increased efforts be made to collect overpayments from veterans rather than the institution. The veteran should be made legally responsible for cashing benefit checks to which he or she is not entitled.
8. The "V" card be re-instituted.
9. The veteran be paid at the end of each term following successful completion of coursework.
10. The veteran upon leaving active duty be given a choice between full educational benefits and no educational benefits with a reduced cash award. This might encourage veterans who have no educational objectives to accept the cash payment rather than later enrolling in an educational institution to obtain the financial benefits.
11. The VA be included among those federal agencies required to publish materials for comment in the Federal Register prior to the issuing of final policy.

12. The delimiting date for educational benefits be removed. The precedent has been set in VA housing benefits and medical benefits.

Additional Comments

1. There is difficulty convincing some veterans that they owe the VA money in overpayment situations since VA informational materials sometimes give the impression that the money has been "earned" by virtue of military experience.

2. The benefit to society of educating veterans must be kept in mind.

3. Regional offices sometimes hide behind the excuse that "the decision is the Central Office's."

4. There is a basic conflict between the VA program and the HEW-funded VCIP. While VCIP is specifically mandated to help educationally disadvantaged veterans attain their educational objectives, VA policies are not designed to assist this group.

Campus Representatives

Bonnie Adair, CSPU, Pomona
Tom Boyle, CSU, Fresno
Cindy Casey, CSU, Fullerton
C.F. Daugherty, CSU, Hayward
Tom Edwards, CSU, Sacramento
Clayton Evans, CSU, Los Angeles
Roland Fisher, CSU, Long Beach
Fred Jorgenson, Sonoma State College
Leonard Kreutner, CSU, Long Beach
Tom Laffey, CSU, Los Angeles
Marvin Laser, CSU, Dominguez Hills
Bob Lasser, CSPU, Pomona
Mike Leaveck, CSC, Stanislaus
Larry McClelland, CSU, Dominguez Hills
Liliana McIntyre, CPSU, San Luis Obispo
Ed Mendez, San Diego State University
Frank Noffke, CSU, Long Beach
Bob Sampson, San Jose State University
Nancy Sprotte, San Francisco State University
John Sweeney, CSU, Fullerton

Tim Tucker, CSC, San Bernardino
Joann Von Wald, CSC, San Bernardino
Roy Williams, CSU, Fullerton
Tino Zamora, CSU, Sacramento

Chancellor's Office Representatives

Paula Hausvick, Consortium
Susan Hunter, Student Affairs
David Kagan, Student Affairs
Carol Smith, Student Affairs

Others

Conrad Wedberg, University of Southern California

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGES

1250 CONNECTICUT AVENUE · SUITE 400 · WASHINGTON D.C. 20036 · (202) 785-2424

WASHINGTON OFFICE

May 23,1978

To: David Kagan
Student Affairs

From: Sheppie Abramowitz SA

Re: Seat Time and Standards of Progress Study

Mr. William Shannon, who was formerly the Vice President of the American Association of Junior Colleges, has been selected by the Veterans Administration to prepare the Congressionally mandated study on "seat time" and "standards of progress." He will be in California the week of June 11th to meet with administrators interested in this subject. I have suggested that the Chancellor's Office, via your office, would be the focal point for organizing a meeting between him and our representatives. Mr. Shannon is very interested in hearing our suggestions and comments on the "seat time" and "standards of progress" issue. My files indicate that the following people in our system are concerned: George McCabe, Ralph Mills, and President Gerth. I am sure that Sue Hunter would know the complete list.

Your office should contact Mr. Shannon directly:

Mr. William Shannon
President
William G. Shannon & Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795
(301)949-9470

I am sure that we will be anxious to talk with Mr. Shannon.

SA:jl

bcc: Bill Shannon ✓

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TALLAHASSEE 32304

RALPH D. TURLINGTON
COMMISSIONER

LEE G. HENDERSON
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

June 9, 1978

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community College Presidents
Council of Student Affairs
Veterans Officers

FROM: Lee G. Henderson Lee

SUBJECT: Florida Public Hearings on VA Standards of Progress and "Seat Time Provisions Regarding Veteran's Benefits"

Dr. William G. Shannon, formerly with AACJC, has been selected by the Veteran's Administration (federal level) to conduct a study of the standards of progress and "seat time provisions regarding veteran's benefits." This study has been mandated by federal legislation in order to develop new regulations relating to standards of progress and "seat time provisions regarding veteran's benefits." Dr. Shannon is concerned that personnel in community colleges and universities in Florida have an opportunity for input into this study. Therefore, he is conducting three hearings in Florida that will be held on June 26, 27, and 28. Following are the locations of the hearings, times, and suggested list of colleges to attend particular geographic locations:

1. June 26, Tallahassee Community College, Student Conference Room, 444 Appleyard Drive, Tallahassee, Florida 32304, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

   Chipola Junior College
   Florida Junior College at Jacksonville
   Gulf Coast Community College
   Lake City Community College
   North Florida Junior College
   Okaloosa-Walton Junior College
   Pensacola Junior College
   Santa Fe Community College
   Tallahassee Community College

2. June 27, Hillsborough Community College, Dale Mabry Campus, Room 202, Tampa, Florida 33622 (corner of Dale Mabry and Tampa Bay), 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

   Brevard Community College
   Central Florida Community College
   Daytona Beach Community College
   Hillsborough Community College
   Lake-Sumter Community College
   Manatee Junior College
   Pasco-Hernando Community College
   Polk Community College
   Seminole Community College
   South Florida Junior College
   St. John's River Community College
   St. Petersburg Junior College
   Valencia Community College

Memorandum
June 9, 1978
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3. June 28, Broward Community College, Central Campus, Building 83, Room 208, 3501 S.W. Davie Road, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33314, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Broward Community College	Indian River Community College
Edison Community College	Miami-Dade Community College
Florida Keys Community College	Palm Beach Community College

Enclosed is a discussion guide for this meeting. You should note that it is a first draft and will be changed in some sense by the time of the hearing. However, this will offer a guide to you for discussion purposes. We encourage you to send personnel from your college that can give Dr. Shannon adequate advise concerning this subject. He has been assured that the results of his study will directly affect federal regulations.

kht

Enclosure

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TALLAHASSEE 32304

RALPH D. TURLINGTON
COMMISSIONER

LEE G. HENDERSON
DIRECTOR
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

June 22, 1978

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. William Shannon

FROM: Stafford L. Thompson

SUBJECT: Itinerary

June 25, 1978

Flight 167, Eastern, arriving in Tallahassee at 2:19 p.m.
Hotel - Ramada Inn, West
Dr. Shannon will be picked up by Mr. Dave Ehlert and taken to the Ramada Inn

June 26, 1978

Dr. Shannon will be picked up from the Ramada Inn by Stafford Thompson at 9:00 a.m.
Hearing - Tallahassee Community College
Student Center Conference Room
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Dr. Shannon will be taken to the airport by Stafford Thompson.
Flight 799, Eastern, departure to Tampa - 5:20 p.m., arriving in Tampa - 5:59 p.m.
Hotel - Host International Hotel (located in the Tampa Airpot, 1-800-282-8653)

June 27, 1978

Dr. Shannon will be picked up from the Host International Hotel at 9:00 a.m. by Joe Gannon
Hearings - Hillsborough Community College, Dale Mabry Campus, Room 202
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Dr. Shannon will be taken to the airport by Joe Gannon.
Flight 439 Eas., ~~Delta~~, departure to Ft. Lauderdale - [illegible] p.m., arriving in Ft. Lauderdale - [illegible] p.m.
Dr. Shannon will take limousine to Behia Mar Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

June 28, 1978

Dr. Shannon will be picked up from the Behia Mar Hotel at 9:00 a.m. by Tom Dodson
Hearing - Broward Community College, Central Campus
Building A5, Room 208
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Dr. Shannon will be taken to the airport by Tom Dodson.

SLT:st

cc: Katherine E. Hunter
Dave Ehlert

City
Colleges of
Chicago

[illegible] NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60601 AREA CODE 312 269 8000

Office of the
Executive Vice Chancellor

June 5, 1978

Dear Colleague:

City Colleges of Chicago has been asked to host a meeting for the purpose of providing Colleges in the Chicago metropolitan area an opportunity to present reactions to several Veterans Administration regulations pertaining to students receiving Veterans Benefits. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 14, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Harry S Truman College, 1145 West Wilson Avenue, here in Chicago.

William G. Shannon and Associates (Dr. Shannon is formerly of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges) will lead the discussion and receive the written reactions to the topics for discussion. Shannon and Associates are conducting a study for the Veterans Administration which is required to report to Congress soon on a number of issues concerning Veterans Benefits Regulations. The primary topics of concern are, "Standards of Progress" and "Seat Time" for Veterans. They apologize for the short notice of this meeting, but feel it is of great importance to have input from Colleges and Universities nationally as a basis for their report to Congress.

Please arrange for the appropriate individual, or individuals, at your institution to prepare your institution's reactions to the questions contained in the enclosed discussion guide and bring them to the meeting on June 14. If it is humanly impossible for you to have a representative present on such short notice, please send your written responses to me for submission at the meeting.

We hope you will agree with us that the opportunity to present institutional reactions to the issues concerning students receiving Veterans Benefits is important enough to make maximum effort to prepare responses and attend the meeting even on such short notice. So that we will be able to better plan for the meeting, please contact Donald C. Scott of my office at 269-8207 if a representative of your institution is able to attend. He can also be contacted if you have questions concerning the meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Donald W. Hill

Donald W. Hill
Executive Vice Chancellor

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Lansing, Michigan 48909

JOHN W. PORTER
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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Governor
WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN
Ex-Officio

June 7, 1978

Mr. Douglas Bradley
165 Division Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53704

Dear Mr. Bradley:

Enclosed is a copy of the information being sent to institutional representatives regarding our meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 20 here in Lansing.

I am also sending a copy of the material to Mr. R. C. Tuttle, Veterans Services Officer, VARO, Detroit, for his information.

Please let me know of your travel arrangements. If I can provide any assistance on reservations, etc., I will be glad to do so.

Sincerely

James F. Weber, Director
Higher Education Management Services

JFW/[illegible]

Enclosure

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Lansing, Michigan 48909

JOHN W. PORTER
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

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DR. PAUL B. HENRY
NORMAN OTTO STOCKMEYER, SR.
Governor
WILLIAM G. MILLIKEN
Ex-Officio

June 8, 1978

TO: Persons Interested in VA Training Programs
at Institutions of Higher Learning

FROM: James F. Weber, Director
Higher Education Management Services

SUBJECT: Meeting on "Standards of Progress" and "Seat Time" Provisions of VA Regulations

The Congress has commissioned a study of VA legislation and regulations regarding Standards of Progress and Seat Time.

The consulting firm which has contracted to conduct this study, William G. Shannon and Associates of Kensington, Maryland, has requested that we arrange a hearing in Lansing to give individuals involved in Veterans Training programs an opportunity to provide information on these issues.

We have arranged with Mr. Douglas Bradley of William G. Shannon and Associates for a hearing to be held at the following time and place.

TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 1978 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL BUILDING, ROOM 202
LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LANSING, MICHIGAN

This meeting will give you an opportunity to provide direct input to the Congress on these important issues. If you have any questions about this meeting, please feel free to call me at (517) 373-3820, or Mr. David Hanson, at (517) 373-6551.

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN BY JUNE 16, 1978

Name______________________________ Telephone______________

Institution or Agency______________________________

( ) Plan to Attend

( ) Cannot Attend but will send written comments

( ) Cannot attend

PLEASE RETURN TO:
Mr. David Hanson
Higher Education Management Services
Department of Education
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, Michigan 48909

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Dallas County Community College District

June 8, 1978

Mr. Bill Shannon
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795

Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

701 Elm Street
Room 200
Dallas, Texas 75202
2 46-2129

Board of Trustees
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Chancellor
Dr. Bill J. Priest

Dear Bill:

Just wanted to let you know that I have made contact with DCCCD Presidents, TCJC and other area colleges and universities regarding your visit on June 23. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. in the DCCCD Board Room. Each of the institutions has been asked to send a representative which should total about 15 - 20 people.

I am looking forward to your visit. Please come by my office (2nd floor) prior to the meeting.

Sincerely,

Jan

R. Jan LeCroy
Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

RJL:js

P.S. Attached is a list of the colleges and universities invited.

DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Colleges and Universities Invited to June 23 Meeting

Brookhaven College

Cedar Valley College

Eastfield College

El Centro College

Mountain View College

North Lake College

Richland College

Tarrant County Junior College

University of Texas at Dallas

University of Texas at Arlington

North Texas State University

East Texas State University

Bishop College

University of Dallas

TACOMA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

MEMORANDUM

DATE June 22, 1978

FROM Dick Batdorf DB

BJECT Dr. Bill Shannon and VA Field Research Study

To: Larry Stevens

Larry, this is the summary of the activities which occured during the day on June 19 when Dr. Bill Shannon was a guest on our campus.

Shannon's activities were divided into three phases. The first was his informal meeting with us early in the morning in your office. The second was a meeting with a group of some ten veteran's advisors from both two- and four-year colleges and universities in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The third phase, which lasted throughout the afternoon was a meeting with a variety of people who have special expertise or concerns relating to those regulations and circulars being issued by the Veterans Administration which have caused so much grief and anxiety in their field application. The participants in the afternoon session included Bill Deller, representing the Student Services Commission, Jim Manning, Chief of the State Approving Agency, Dan Evans, Al Zimmerman and Steve Howard, representing the Veterans Program Administrators of Washington, Jack Bugge, Assistant Registrar at Boise State, Bob Beckett, Southern Oregon University Veterans Coordinator, Paul Bean, Veteran's Advisor at OTCC, and Willie Jackson, VA Certifying Official at the Evergreen State College.

The thrust of Shannon's field study focuses on four specific issues around which the VA has promulgated various regulations and directives:

1. Definitions and enforcement of "seat-time" requirements for credit and for subsequent certification for benefits.

2. Regulations concerning the definition of "satisfactory progress" in terms of academic progress toward degree completion.

3. Record keeping requirements and demands necessary to remain in compliance with VA regulations.

4. Regulations governing compliance with VA regulations as stated in college catalogs.

Shannon also expressed some interest in the degree to which colleges have been able to computerize their record keeping for veterans and

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Larry Stevens
6/22/78

the specifics surrounding various law suits filed against the VA, particularly the suit filed by the Evergreen State College and Spokane Falls Community College.

The key items which emerged during the day's activities and which Shannon will be including in his final report to the VA, include the following:

1. The lack of a knowledgeable authority from the field of higher education in the VA Central Office staff is an increasingly significant problem. It was recommended that an advisory board of higher education professionals from both two- and four-year institutions be established and that any regulations or circulars be reviewed and commented upon by this advisory board prior to publication of the regulations and not afterwards.

2. Recommendation that the VA abandon the type of broad, sweeping and increasingly detailed and restrictive regulations intended to correct abuses by the one per cent but working to the detriment of the 99 per cent who already are complying.

3. Seat-time or the 12-hour rule. There is unanimous opposition to the VA's intrusion in this area since it clearly infringes on the school's traditional right to design and implement its own curriculum. It is a particularly critical problem in the areas of independent study and work internships. Again the problem is one of the VA passing sweeping regulations to correct abuses perpetrated by a very small minority of institutions, notably proprietary schools in this instance. The recommendation is that a college is in essential compliance with the seat-time or 12-hour rule if it is accredited and if its programs are approved by a state approving agency. A further point was made that in states such as Washington, the opportunities for abuse, given the presence of such watchdog agencies as CPE and, more important, OFM, are exceedingly remote.

4. Attendance and standards of progress. There was less unanimity around this issue since it appears that there are wide discrepancies in the degree and ways in which this is enforced by various regional VA offices. There was agreement, however, that a mid-term check on attendance coupled with a final grade check at the end of the quarter would not be too burdensome a reporting requirement but that the strict thirty-day requirement imposed by the Seattle VA Regional Office was far too restrictive. The important point was the need to liberalize

the 30-day requirement and, at the same time, establish a clear standard applicable to all colleges.

5. Record keeping and compliance costs. Paticipants agreed that in the past three or four years paperwork requirements from the VA have increased at least threefold even though the veteran population continues to decline. This is putting colleges in the position of increasingly raising the question of whether or not the investment of staff time and material resources in providing VA-approved education is worth the effort. Specifically, there is rather clear evidence at hand that the average annual cost for certifying a veteran is $46 per year depending upon the category of veteran in question, the VA gives us either $7 or $11 per year.

6. VA information in college catelog. There is increasing concern that the VA demands, on the one hand, that rather detailed information concerning veteran's benefits be placed in the catelog of a college or university while, at the same time, changing the rules and regulations so frequently and in such sweeping ways that colleges are increasingly fearful of putting anything in the catelog in reference to veteran's benefits and requirements.

7. Computerization of reporting and compliance activities. Most colleges are afraid to invest in this for a variety of reasons. For the community colleges, there is still so much skepticism even about the prospect of getting a software program written let alone concerns over how long it would take to debug such a program were one written. The University of Washington, on the other hand, spent $4,000 to program its computer to enforce the so-called "85-15" rule only to learn that the rule had been suspended the month following the writing of the program. This is another manifestation of the apprehension and frustration created by the VA's frequent and unpredictable changes of direction.

8. Law suits against the VA. There are currently about 40 suits which have been filed across the country against the VA which raise a wide variety of objections to the array of regulations flowing from the VA central office. There is an increasing belief that the VA appears to be backing down from rigid enforcement of at least is more unreasonable regulations in the face of mounting pressure congress is feeling from both veterans and the higher education community.

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Larry Stevens
6/22/78

In summary, Dr. Shannon indicated that he was greatly impressed with both the quality and quantity of data he was able to gather while here in Tacoma and expressed his great appreciation to the college generally and to Steve Howard in particular for making his visit a most enjoyable and productive one. How well colleges will fare as a result of Shannon's effort will not be known until October when his final report is submitted.

If you have any further questions, Larry, please feel free to contact me.

RLB/ky

cc: Steve Howard

Tacoma Community College

MEMORANDUM

ate: June 21, 1978

o: Al Clarke/Dick Batdorf/Larry Stevens

rom: Steven Howard

ubject: Summary of Dr. Shannon's Meeting - Afternoon Session

resent: Dr. Dellar - President of W. S. S. C. - Dean of Students Everett Community College

Jim Manning - State Approving Agency

Dan Evans - President of Evergreen State College

Al Zimmerman - President of V. P. A. W.

Steven Howard - V. A. Chairman of V. P. A. W.

Jack Bugge - Assistant Registrar Boise State University

Bob Beckett - N. A. C. V. Western Coordinator and Southern Oregon University Veterans Advisor

Paul Bean - O. T. C. C. Veterans Advisor

Willie Jackson - Evergreen State College Certifying Official

Topics discussed (See enclosed list of items from California memo)

1. Requested note be made in study reference a better philosophical view by V.A. toward Higher Education. Lack of expertise in V. A. as to what education is about today. Suggested advisory board be created with higher education representatives as members. Suggested strongly that higher education people be consulted before regulation is put out - not after.

2. Recommended the regulation be strictly enforced on an individual basis against schools that abuse regulations not against the 99% that are following the rules.

3. a. SEAT time or 12 hour rule - schools are opposed to any infringment upon the schools granting of credit for an independent study course or work internship. If school is accredited by a national accrediting agency and further approved by a state approving agency then the granting of credit is between these agencies - not the V. A. Schools that are suspect, such as proprietary schools, should be dealt with by the S. A. A.

b. Schools have such differing Standards of Progress that the S. A. A. should sit with each institution to develop standards of progress for that school. Sohcols have no quarrel with reporting nonattending students as soon as we find out they are not attending. A mid-term check and a grade check would not be too burdensome for most schools to check on students progress. 30 day reporting requirement was pointed out as being to restrictive a time in which to report nonattending students. Standards need to be dealt with and enforced but same standard should apply to all students if possible.

c. Record keeping - Average cost of certifying a veteran is $40.00 per veteran. V. A. gives us $7.00 and $11.00. Paperwork has increased threefold but the veteran population is going down. Sohcols are wondering if the investment is worth it. V. A. should increase the monetary assistance to us to do the paperwork.

4. Catalog - Information concerning veterans standards, tuition cost should be in the school catalog. Comment made that V. A. changes its mind so quickly that schools are afraid to put anything in the catalog reference veterans.

5. Computerized programs - University of Washington spent $4,000.00 to program a computer for the 85-15 rule only to find it eliminated the next month. Schools must still tabulate information mostly by hand.

6. Lawsuits number about 40 against the V. A. V. A. is backing down due to intense political pressure.

I appreciate your comments and support during the morning meeting with Dr. Shannon. It is gratifying to have the backing of my superiors in my efforts to do battle against the V. A. on behalf of our schools and the rest of the Community College system. I feel the time I invest and you let me invest will bring results this October when Dr. Shannon's report goes in. He was very impressed with the assembled knowledge and we will carry weight in his report. Again thank you for attending.

DRAFT

William G. Shannon
and Associates
National and International
Education Consultants
301 949-9470
10204 Summit Avenue, Kensington, Maryland 20795

June 2, 1978

Discussion Guide--
Bill Shannon
Doug Bradley
Frank Pesci

A Study of the Standards of Progress and Seat Time Provisions Regarding Veterans' Benefits

A. Scope of Work:

Section 305 (b)(2), PL 95-202, requires the Veterans Administration to conduct a study to investigate the need for legislative or administrative action in regard to sections 1674 and 1724 of 38 U.S.C., and the regulations prescribed thereunder, the "standards of progress" provisions. Congress also desires a sufficient discussion and analysis of the "seat time" regulations in the study.

B. Selected Topics for Discussion:

1)STANDARDS OF PROGRESS--

This requires institutions to monitor the veteran/student's progress toward completion of a program of education-- what are your views on this policy, and what changes, if any, would you suggest?

-How does your institution measure student progress?

-Section 1780 (a)(4) of 38 U.S.C. prohibits payment of benefits to veterans for those courses in which the grade assigned is not used to compute the requirements for graduation, including a course from which the student withdraws-- how does your institution view this policy?

-When unsatisfactory progress is reported to the VA, mitigating circumstances will be considered as outlined in DVB Circular 20-76-84, appendix C, Revised paragraph 9-- what is your opinion of this VA procedure?

2) SEAT TIME--

DVB Circular 20-76-16 "Measurement for Payment Purposes VA Regulation 14272 (d)" states that "in no case will a course be measured as full time when less than 12 class sessions per week are required."

-What do you consider an appropriate definition of "full time?"

-How would you maintain records of class time?

-Upon what basis do you assign credit relative to seat (class) time?

3) RECORD KEEPING--

-What are your comments regarding the VA's record keeping requirements?

-Do you utilize computers in your record keeping? If not, does this cause a problem?

-If you feel you have a good accounting system, what suggestions could you make to other institutions who may wish to improve their record keeping?

4) SAFEGUARDS--

The intent of the recent legislation is to prevent widespread abuse of taxpayer's monies-- what is your institution's conception of the extent of abuse resulting from progress and measurement criteria?

-What safeguards can be designed to curb abuse of veterans' benefits?

5) CATALOGS AND BULLETINS--

Section 504 (1) of PL 94-502 extended to accredited institutions the requirement that in making applications for approval under title 38, such accredited institution must transmit to the appropriate State Approving Agency copies of the institution's catalogs and bulletins, certified as true and correct in content and policy by an authorized representative of the school-- what is your opinion of the VA regulations requiring information be included in your catalog?

-Do you have a procedure for keeping editors aware of Federal regulations which might be helpful to other institutions?

6) RECOMMENDATIONS--

a. Regulations: Is there a need for changes in the VA policies and procedures?
What will the effects of any such changes be and whom will they affect?

b. Legislation: Is there a need for a change in legislation dealing with veterans' benefits?
What will the effects of any such changes be and whom will they affect?

c. Veterans: If the legislation and/or regulations are modified, would the results be more beneficial to veterans?

d. General: Do you have any recommendations regarding VA policies and procedures at the federal, state, and local levels?

RESUME

WILLIAM G. SHANNON

(As of August 1, 1978: Executive Director, National Advisory Council on Extension and Continuing Education, 425 13th St. N.W., Washington DC 20005)

CURRENT:

President
William G. Shannon and Associates
10204 Summit Avenue
Kensington, Maryland 20795 (301) 949 9470

National and international education consultants. Emphasis on creative approaches to problem analysis, program design and development for national and international education associations and consortiums and on improving curriculum, staff orientation, government relations, community services and continuing education, and resource development in postsecondary education.

FORMER POSITIONS:

American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Washington, D. C.

Senior Vice President 1973-1975
Associate Executive Director 1958-1973
Acting Executive Director 1970-1971

For seventeen years held major responsibility for initiating and administering the Association's national programs to serve member colleges. Efforts included gaining visibility and recognition for the field by working with Congress, Federal agencies, soliciting program funds, and interpreting the community college to many publics, particularly at the national level.

Specific program initiatives and responsibilities included: governmental relations; university based administrator training programs; occupational education projects, Servicemen's Opportunity College Program; student personnel services, Developing Institutions programs, Office of International Programs, minority programs, Allied Health Education and community services.

Served as staff to various commissions and assemblies; organized international conferences and travelled extensively both nationally and internationally as representative of the organization and consultant on community colleges and technical education. Served on numerous national advisory committees, and as liaison officer with other national education associations.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Executive Director, Encampment for Citizenship; New York, N. Y. and
Berkeley, California, 1951 - 1958

Directed national youth leadership training program emphasizing effective ethical citizen involvement in community development and government. Introduced young men and women to outstanding leaders in politics, national and international affairs through a program of lectures, workshops, seminars and field work. Responsibilities included administration of program, staff development, recruitment and fund raising.

Head Teacher, Play Schools of New York City; Teacher, Fieldston High School, Riverdale, New York, 1949 - 1951

Community Manager, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio 1946 - 1947; Elective full-time position as chief executive officer of the college community.

Synthane Corporation, Oaks, Pa.: machine shop and bench work; Curtis Wright Airplane Division, Columbus, Ohio: equipment and machinery procurement; Orchard School, Indianapolis: teacher; 1939 - 1943

EDUCATION AND DEGREES:

B. S. Engineering and Education, Antioch College, 1948
M. A., 1949 and
Ed. D., 1962, Technical Institute and Community College Administration, Teachers College, Columbia University; Dissertation: "The Community College President."

MEMBER OF:

Charter member: National Council on Community Services
Adult Education Association
National Association of Human Rights Workers
Phi Delta Kappa
American Veterans Committee

MILITARY SERVICE: Meteorologist, U. S. Army Air Force; weather forecaster, U. S. and Central Pacific; 1943 -1946

LANGUAGES: Fluent in conversational Arabic, fair knowledge of French

LISTED IN: Who's Who in Education; Who's Who in Maryland

FAMILY: Wife, Joan; two children: Carol (Mrs. Jean Pierre Hsu) and Jeffrey;
Residence: Kensington, Maryland and Purgitsville, West Virginia

Resume Of
Douglas J. Bradley

Address: 165 Division Street
Madison, Wisconsin
Phone: (608) 244-4373

d.o.b. 6/7/47
married, no children
excellent health

WORK EXPERIENCE:

May 1978-present

Education consultant, William G. Shannon and Associates, Kensington, Maryland

Assisted in design, planning, and implementation of government study. Developed discussion guide, arranged for and conducted nation-wide meetings with educators and institution and state agency staffs, and helped in the writing and preparation of the final report.

July 1974-July 1977

Job placement specialist, Vets House, Inc., Madison, Wisconsin

Responsible for a weekly caseload of between 15 to 20 under and unemployed Vietnam era veterans. Duties included: intake and assessment, benefits counseling, job seeking skills training, resume preparation, interview assistance, employer contact, and placement follow-up.

Served one year as president of the organization. Executive responsibilities included: overall program administration, fund raising, liason with funding sources, and personnel supervision.

Represented the organization on the local Manpower (C.E.T.A.) Council aiding in the disbursement of funds and the development of programs to assist economically disadvantaged citizens.

JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE:

March 1978-present

Staff writer, Madison Press Connection, Madison, Wisconsin

	Contributor of a weekly travel column that highlights overseas travel and cultural enrichment.
March 1970- November 1971	Information Specialist, U.S. Army, Vietnam Writer and associate editor for *The Army Reporter*. Duties included: research and writing, layout, paste-up, and editorial assistance. Honorably discharged.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

August 1974-May 1975	Instructor, University of Wisconsin-Baraboo, Baraboo, Wisconsin Taught one section of freshman composition, two sections of advanced composition, and one introduction to literature course.
September 1973- May 1974	Graduate Assistant, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington Taught three sections of freshman composition.

PUBLICATIONS:

July 1978	"The Long Road Through Beirut," *The Progressive*
March 1977	"Bad Paper Vets," *The Progressive*

EDUCATION:

September 1972- May 1974	M.A. (with distinction), Washington State University, Pullman, Washington. Major: English
September 1965- May 1969	B.A. (with honors), Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia. Major: English; Minor: History

TRAVEL:	Extensive travel throughout the United States, Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia.
REFERENCES:	References will be furnished upon request.

FRANK B. PESCI, SR.
8311 Fremont Place
New Carrollton, MD 20784
(301) 577-8424

Specialized professional competence

Education (management, higher education, community colleges)
Government relations and public affairs (legislative process)
Policy development, analysis, review and oversight
Budget analysis and program evaluation

Representative assignments

Maryland General Assembly — State Delegate — 1/71 to Present

Chairman (since August 1973) of House Appropriations Subcommittee responsible for analyzing and evaluating the State's annual operating and capital budgets in the areas of public health, mental hygiene, personnel administration, planning, general services, natural resources and recreation, agriculture, economic and community development, and higher education.

Represents the House of Delegates on the Legislative Advisory Council of the Southern Regional Education Board, and at meetings of the Education Commission of the States.

Catholic University of America — Associate Professor of Higher Education — 6/65-4/77

Directed 31 doctoral dissertations in the field of educational management. Served on 41 other dissertation committees.

Directed an M.A. degree program in college business management under an Education Professions Development Act grant.

Taught graduate courses in educational management, higher education and the courts, the politics of education, and higher education and state relations.

Prince George's Community College — Government Professor
Academic Dean
Trustee — 9/58-1/71

Served as first Dean of Academic Affairs. Responsible for curriculum development, faculty recruitment, budget development (1962-1966).

Served as Vice Chairman of Board of Trustees (1969-1970).

Additional professional experience

Visiting Professor of Higher Education at:
- University of Virginia (Spring 1970)
- University of Hawaii (Summer 1973)
- University of Colorado (Spring 1975)
- Johns Hopkins University (since Summer 1975)
- VPI and State University (since January 1976)
- Loyola College (Md.) (since September 1976)

Organized and directed conferences for:
- Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities
- American Association for Higher Education
- Education Commission of the States
- American Association of University Professors
- American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
- National Association of College and University Business Officers

Served as major presenter and/or panelist at meetings of the:
- American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
- Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities
- American Association for Higher Education
- Education Commission of the States
- American Association of University Administrators
- Southern Regional Education Board
- Eagleton Institute of Politics
- Council for Advancement and Support of Education
- National Association of State Universities and Land-grant College
- Association of Institutional Research

Served on Governor's Commission to Study the Structure and Governance of Education in Maryland (1973-1975).

Elected to a 3-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, beginning July 1, 1977.

Education

B.S. in Chemistry (1953), Seton Hall University
M.A. in Politics (1956) and Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration (1963), The Catholic University of America

Married, 6 children
Birthdate - January 6, 1929
Birthplace - Raritan, New Jersey